



Best Birthday Wishes

to

Suzanne

from

Ruth and Esther

The King's Garden



The King's Garden

The
KING'S GARDEN

by

JOHN HELMER OLSON



AUGUSTANA BOOK CONCERN
Rock Island, Illinois

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FOREWORD

My dear friends:

It is sixteen years since I was confirmed, but I still remember a little about learning the Catechism.

There was something about it not exactly pleasant. Sometimes I wanted to run over to Axel's or Willie's house and play ball. Then mother would look at me earnestly and ask: "Do you know your commandment yet?"

And ten minutes later I was lying on my stomach under the maple tree north of our house with a little blue book under my nose.

Yet there was something very pleasant about that study just the same. After half an hour or so of reading, I could run into the kitchen and tell mother, "Now I know it all." She smiled and said, "That's fine, my boy!" Then my soul rejoiced, and when Willie came over to play, I could throw the ball almost twice as far as he.

Nevertheless I wondered then, and have wondered often afterward, if there is not a way whereby we can make the Catechism of Martin Luther just as interesting to the imaginative mind of childhood and youth as "Robinson Crusoe," or "Heidi" or "Andersen's Fairy Tales." The Catechism I studied had closely printed pages and lacked those ornaments which appeal to the imagination.

Luther's Small Catechism of 1536, of which I have a photographic copy, is quite different. It is printed in two colors

—red and black. There are just a few lines, beautifully printed, on each page and the commandments and petitions are illustrated with woodcuts, pictures from the Old and New Testaments. These illustrations are a little crude, but wonderfully interesting just the same. How happy I would have been to have owned such a Catechism when I was a lad!

And now, only a few months ago, various Lutheran Synods in America issued a Jubilee Edition of the Catechism. This, too, is beautifully printed and illustrated. As I turn its pages I almost wish I could learn the Catechism all over again. And, to be sure, there would be no harm in my doing it.

In fact, dear friends, this little book of mine is an effort on my part to “learn the Catechism” once more. Four hundred years ago Luther wrote this wonderful little book. During this anniversary year, therefore, I decided to travel through its pages carefully once again, with Faith and Imagination as my two guides. This little volume is the story of that journey. Every question and answer in this book is taken from the lives and the loves and hates of men and women, boys and girls. There is a story hidden in every line.

You remember that our dear Lord spoke very often in parables. We know many of them by heart. And I believe that Jesus would like to have us also speak in parables, that is, tell stories. That is what I have tried to do in this book. I try to tell you a little story about each commandment and article and petition. This story does not contain all the truth in the particular question and answer. Even a book about each of them would not be sufficient for that. So I hope you don't expect too much of me. I am just trying to show you how wonderfully the Catechism explains life to us all.

And how do I happen to call this book "The King's Garden"? The answer is found in the following letter from Martin Luther to his little son Hans:

Coburg, Germany, June 19, 1530.

Grace and peace in Christ, my dear little son!

I hear with great pleasure that you are learning your lessons so well and praying so diligently. Continue to do so, my son, and cease not. When I come home I will bring you a nice present from the fair.

I know of a beautiful garden, where there are a great many children in fine little coats, and they go under the trees and gather beautiful apples and pears, cherries and plums; they sing and run about and are as happy as they can be. Sometimes they ride on nice little ponies, with golden bridles and silver saddles.

I asked the man whose garden it is: "What little children are these?"

And he told me: "They are little children who love to pray and learn and who are good."

Then I said: "My dear sir, I have a little boy at home. His name is little Hans Luther. Would you let him come into the garden, too, to eat some of these nice apples and pears, and ride these fine little ponies, and play with these children?"

The man said: "If he loves to say his prayers and learn his lessons, and is a good boy, he may come, and Lippus and Jost also; and when they are all together, they can play upon the fife and drum and lute and all kinds of instruments, and skip about and play with little crossbows."

He then showed me a beautiful, mossy place in the middle of the garden for them to skip about in, with a great many golden fifes and drums and silver crossbows. The children had not yet had their dinner, and I could not wait to see them play, but I said to the man: "My dear sir, I will go away and write all about it to my little son and tell him to be fond of saying his prayers and learn well and be good, so that he may come into this garden; but he has a grand-aunt named Lehne, whom he must bring along with him."

The man said: "Very well; go write to him."

Now, my dear little son, love your lessons and your prayers, and tell Philip and Jodocus to do so too, that you may all come to the garden. May God bless you. Give Aunt Lehne my love and kiss her for me.

Your loving father, MARTIN LUTHER.

If we "love to say our prayers and learn our lessons and are good," we shall be allowed to come to the wonderful garden too: Jodocus and Philip and Hans and Martin Luther and Aunt Lehne and you and I—all of us.

Not only that, it seems to me that if we read the Catechism of Martin Luther in the right way, if we think of life and truth and God as we read it, and if we let our fancy play around the words a little as we read it, then this book itself becomes truly "The King's Garden," a garden of truth and love and mercy.

My little book is written for boys and girls, young men and young women, old men and old women—for everybody. If we are too old and wise to read over again the truths of God which we find in the Catechism, then we are too old to enter that beautiful garden of God—heaven. That would be a sad state of mind indeed.

I feel sure, however, that all of you who have read to this point are anxious to journey with me through the Little Catechism once again. As I said a moment ago, we shall follow the guidance of two very expert mountain-climbers, Imagination, who can travel as swiftly as thought, and Faith, who can mount on eagle's wings higher than the highest mountains, higher than the loftiest stars.

My last wish is that some day all of us may "play upon the fife and drum and lute and all kinds of instruments and skip about and play with little crossbows" with Jodocus and Hans and Philip and, I am sure, Aunt Lehne and Doctor Martin Luther will not be too dignified to join in the game. Then the King's Garden shall be a reality and not only a little book.

Your friend in Christ,

JOHN HELMER OLSON.

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The Ten Commandments

In the plain form in which the head of the family shall teach them to his household



*“For the law was given through Moses;
grace and truth came through Jesus
Christ”*

THE INTRODUCTION.

I am the *Lord* thy God.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt have no other Gods before Me.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.

FOLLOWING STRANGE GODS.

Just as Magnus was ready to close the lid of his suitcase, mother came into the room.

She stood in the doorway a moment watching him.

"Haven't you forgotten something?" she asked.

"Why, no!" Magnus exclaimed in surprise. "Oh yes, I have too—"

Mother was looking sadly at a black, gilt-edged book on the table by the bed, his Confirmation Bible. She brought the Book to him herself, holding it tenderly between her two lovely hands.

"Never forget this Book!" she told him, tears trickling down her face. "And never forget your God, even if—even if you should forget your father and me!"

"How you talk, mother! Of course I won't!" Magnus said, trying hard to appear brave.

Then mother put the Holy Book carefully beside the box which contained his white starched collars. In the next in-

stant she drew her boy close to her heart and wept on his shoulder.

"You are going into the wide, wicked world," she whispered in his ear. "Don't forget to fear and love and trust in your Saviour above all things."

Then Magnus, too, wept and promised mother that he would always love her and never forget his God.

Ten years passed by.

Magnus had now become one of the big business men of Chicago, the owner of a large department store.

He always remembered his mother—although he was one of the busiest men in that metropolis—wrote to her and sent her presents and even visited her once or twice a year. But he did not keep the other part of his promise. He forgot to read the Bible. He seldom prayed. He went to church only on Easter Sunday and Christmas morning.

One day as he was sitting in his office dictating letters, a boy brought him a telegram from home.

It read: "Mother dying. Come home at once."

Panic-stricken, Magnus dropped everything and rushed home. Part of the way he rode in an airplane. And all the time he was saying to himself in agony of soul, "I forgot my Bible. I forgot my God."

And now he prayed—prayed for forgiveness for his past neglect, promised all kinds of impossible things if the Lord only would save his mother's life, if He would only grant him to speak to her once more before she left this world.

When he rushed through the door into the old home, mother was already breathing her last. She could no longer hear or see.

"Mother! Mother! Forgive me, I forgot my promise!" he shouted into her ear.

But mother could not answer any more. There was only a slight quivering of the eyelids when he kissed her.

That evening, as the sun was setting, Magnus walked slowly to the church where he had been confirmed, a large church with a high altar and organ pipes on either side.

He was alone in the temple.

The last rays of the sun streamed through the rainbow-colored windows, filling the house of worship with mystic glory. Magnus was overwhelmed. A long time he stood near the altar railing, wringing his hands in agony.

Finally he noticed the bright sun shedding its last beams on the painting above the altar.

It was a picture of Christ as the Good Shepherd leading His sheep into pleasant pastures.

Heart-broken, Magnus held his arms upward toward the Christ.

"O my Saviour!" he pleaded. "I forgot! I forgot Thee! But now I remember—now I remember Thee, and worship Thee! Merciful Lord, forgive me!"

For a long time he wept and prayed, and at last, just as the sun sank, it seemed to him that in the light of its lingering rays the Good Shepherd smiled lovingly down upon him.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not take the Name of the *Lord* thy God in vain; for the *Lord* will not hold him guiltless that taketh His Name in vain.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear and love God so that we do not curse, swear, conjure, lie, or deceive, by His Name, but call upon Him in every time of need, and worship Him with prayer, praise, and thanksgiving.

"SWEAR NOT AT ALL."

As usual, it was a mystery how it began or who started it, but the fact is, Tom and William went at one another in the school-yard.

Tom was dark and fiery and aggressive, with a protruding lower jaw. He was a born fighter. William, on the other hand, had light hair, blue eyes, and a round, sunny face. As a rule he was calm and self-possessed. Many thought William was a born philosopher.

Well, you might expect that, because William's father was the pastor of the Lutheran church in Perry Center, while Tom was the son of the village blacksmith.

The two lads fought long and hard. The two were of about equal age and strength. And as they fought they called each other names, cursed and swore, and used the name of God most infamously, although He had no part whatsoever in their quarrel.

If it was a mystery how the fight started, the end of it was perfectly plain and clear.

Of a sudden William noticed a gaunt, familiar figure on the sidewalk bordering the playground.

It was his father returning home from a sick-call.

Tom, who also saw the tall man through the corner of his eye, socked William a final blow under the chin and ran. Thus the battle ended.

William hardly dared to return home. He walked around this block and that, twice as far as needed, but finally he braced up and walked right into the house.

"Why, what has happened?" his mother asked, noticing some scratches on his face and his torn shirt.

"Oh, I fell down the sand-bank near Thompson's," William lied.

To his surprise his father did not seem to know a thing about the battle. He talked about the people he had seen, and about the new church he was planning for Perry Center, and about a book he was reading. Mother seemed to believe his story about the sand-bank. William was in good luck, for certain. He took heart, ate a big meal, and then played ball with the boys until bed-time.

Not until then did the suffering begin.

William couldn't sleep. He tossed restlessly from side to side in his bed.

"How wicked you are, Bill!" his conscience scolded him. "You, a boy who ought to know better, fight and curse, and then tell a lie to your father and mother to get out of trouble. Why didn't you confess like a man and take your medicine? That's what David would have done, and Lincoln, and Washington!"

He rolled and tossed. The clock struck eleven, half-past

eleven, twelve. And every stroke seemed like the pounding of a hammer on his head.

"Why not be a man—now!" his conscience told him.

He could hear father shuffling about in the study below.

William jumped out of bed, crept stealthily down the stairs. He hardly dared to open the door to the study. He stood in the hall outside breathless, trembling.

Then father opened the door.

"Why, Bill, my boy, what's the trouble?" he asked surprised as the light fell on the pathetic figure of the boy.

"I have committed a great sin today!" William stammered. Then he told the whole story between sobs.

Father drew his son to his bosom. Then both walked softly into the study and the door was shut.

I shall not tell you what happened there, because it is almost too sacred. William will never forget it, of that I am sure. The prayer for forgiveness, the reassuring voice of his father, the eased conscience singing praise unto God was all an experience to be remembered forever.

William returned to his bed that night with joy in his heart and he slept soundly until the sun stood high in the heavens. And that morning happened to be Sunday. William made a mysterious trip after breakfast. His father missed him at Sunday school but said nothing because he surmised something. Sure enough, when he turned from the altar to sing the "Holy," there sat William and Tom side by side in the first pew.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT.

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear and love God so that we do not despise His Word and the preaching of the same, but deem it holy, and gladly hear and learn it.

THE SUNDAY THAT WAS GIVEN TO GOD.

Miss Swanson was a wonderful Sunday school teacher. George and Eleanor loved her almost as much as they loved father and mother.

So when Miss Swanson one day, half playfully, suggested to George's class that "next Sunday let us all keep the day holy, just as God would like to have us do it," George was the first one to say that he would do that and volunteered to prevail upon his sister and parents to do the same.

"Fine!" said Miss Swanson.

So George went home and proclaimed his message.

At first father and mother Watson were not very interested.

"I had planned a fishing trip with Gust and Tom," said Mr. Watson.

"Yes, and Maud and I have already decided on the lunch," Mrs. Watson added regretfully.

"But the fourth of July will soon be here. Can't we let the fishing go till then?" Eleanor exclaimed.

George said nothing, only looked downcast. He liked the

tramp through the woods and the excitement of fishing as much as father Watson did.

"Give up your fool idea," the evil one whispered in his ear. "Let's go fishing!"

But then he remembered his promise to Miss Swanson. He had given his word of honor and would keep it.

"You never want to do what God says. You just want to please yourself," he declared sullenly, and walked out of the room.

Father and mother stared after him in amazement.

"We have raised a preacher in our family," Mr. Watson finally said, laughing.

Then Eleanor stamped her foot and almost in tears exclaimed, "Don't you make fun of George!"

Mr. Watson realized that already his fishing trip was spoiled. His conscience had been awakened a wee bit. Even if he did force George and Eleanor to accompany him and mother and the rest to Lake Merryvale, George's cruel but truthful words would be ringing in his ears, "You always do what pleases yourself!"

"I guess George is right," he thought within himself. "I don't try to please God very often."

Aloud he said to mother and Eleanor, "All right, then, tomorrow we keep blue Sunday!"

George was called back and made to understand that he had won the day.

"You're the boss!" Mr. Watson said laughing. "We will go with you to church or anywhere and do anything you say."

"All right!" George responded briskly, like a little general in command.

Mr. Watson belonged to church but was a poor attendant, and Mrs. Watson thought she fulfilled her religious duties by

being present at Ladies' Aid meetings once a month. There were usually so many picnics and dinner parties on Sundays that, as a rule, their pew remained vacant.

But on this their blue Sunday, the pastor was amazed to see them among the first comers to the church, and all four of them, mother, father, George, Eleanor, sat side by side during the whole service. And they did not leave immediately after the collection either, as is the custom of many, but remained to receive the benediction with bowed heads and then joined enthusiastically in singing the majestic, threefold Amen.

The sermon that day concerned the raising of Lazarus, and Mr. Watson all the while the pastor preached thought to himself, "I am the Lazarus who is risen from the dead."

It was an odd thought. He did not know whence it came, but it rang and echoed through his soul: "I am Lazarus risen from the dead."

"That was a wonderfully helpful sermon," Mr. Watson told the pastor as he and the family left the church.

"Yes, indeed, wonderfully helpful!" Mrs. Watson reiterated.

George and Eleanor didn't know exactly what to say, so they smiled their best instead.

"And what shall we do next?" father asked as the four walked homeward.

"Eat, of course!" George exclaimed. "And then we are going to visit some sick people. I have the list Miss Swanson gave me this morning."

They cold-lunched that noon, but the sandwiches were as tasteful to them as a chicken dinner after the brisk walk from church. Also, as we know, a good conscience is a fine appetizer.

An hour later they drove in their car to Swanberg's.

The old folks were delighted to see them. Mrs. Swanberg almost wept for joy.

"No one has come to see us for weeks," she said.

Both she and Mr. Swanberg were past eighty and quite feeble.

They all had to taste of the wonderful sponge cake Mrs. Swanberg had made the day before.

"I sort of felt someone would come at last," the old lady remarked smiling.

"This is our dessert," George said.

Then they visited old man Larrimore.

It was two years since they last saw him.

He was all crippled up with rheumatism, poor old man, and could hardly manage to care for himself in his little two-room house.

"I feel better now, though," he told them when they left. "Rheumatism isn't half as bad as some sicknesses I know of, especially if someone takes an interest in a person."

And the poor old man wiped a tear from his wrinkled cheek.

Only two homes visited and the afternoon almost gone!

"We won't have time for the hospital today," mother declared. "We'll leave that for next Sunday. Let's look in at Thornberg's and then scoot for home!"

The Thornbergs were newly-weds.

They were as delighted to see the Watson family as the Swanbergs had been.

"And you simply must stay for supper," said Mrs. Thornberg.

So they did, of course, and after that, all went to church.

Somehow the pastor seemed wonderfully enthusiastic and interesting that day. In the evening he preached a sermon about finding happiness and showed how we can never discover

that rare jewel unless we forget ourselves and go about doing good in Jesus' name.

"Yes, we have found that out this afternoon," Mr. Watson decided within himself.

And then, unconsciously, he put his arm around George, who sat beside him. George looked up into his father's face puzzled but happy.

"You have been a fine captain today!" Mr. Watson whispered into his son's ear.

After church Mr. Watson invited the pastor and his wife for a ride in the moonlight, and they had a wonderful time indeed.

That night, just as George was falling asleep, he heard father and mother reading something in unison.

This was so unusual that George sat up in bed to listen.

And, do you know, this is what they were repeating, their voice trembling with a new, holy emotion:

"Now I lay me down to sleep.
I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to keep.
If I should die before I wake,
I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to take. Amen."

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT.

Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear and love God so that we do not despise our parents and superiors, nor provoke them to anger, but honor, serve, obey, love, and esteem them.

SANDY AND ANDY.

"But mother, you know I'll stay by you always," Sandy exclaimed earnestly.

Mother had wept unconsolably for half an hour, but now she finally looked up into Sandy's face.

"You know I will," Sandy repeated, putting his right hand upon her shoulder tenderly, caressing with his left her lovely, work-worn hands.

"But I can never forget poor Andy!"

And then mother began to weep again.

Andy had run away from home. He had been gone for over two months now, and they had not heard a word from him. It was as if the earth had swallowed him.

It was hard indeed for mother to endure this second great trial of her life.

Father died when Sandy and Andy, as the neighbors had nicknamed the twins, were only two years old. That was the

first great tribulation. But bravely the little woman had gone to work, and by washing and sewing and otherwise laboring with her hands she had earned a living for them all, until now the boys were old enough to become the bread-winners for the home.

The boys were as different as night and day—as even twins may be at times. Sandy was a cheerful lad with clear, blue eyes always twinkling, always smiling, always kind, always anxious to please his mother. But Andy as a rule was sullen and silent. Mother excused him, saying,

“He’s so studious, my dear Andy. We’ll have to overlook his faults.”

This was a mistake on her part, because Andy saw he could take advantage of his mother’s kind heart and soon left all the chores and all the obeying, in fact, to Sandy, and sought only to please himself.

It is true that when at home Andy always dug his nose into a book, but this was not on account of any great thirst for learning, far from it. Andy read nothing but Wild West and robber stories, full of blood and murder. At home he had little to say to mother and Sandy, but when with his gang out in the alleys of the town he was one of the ring-leaders, especially if some destructive prank was to be played.

Now he had run away from home, like the boys he read about in his books.

“Good riddance!” many of the neighbors said.

But his disappearance almost broke his mother’s heart. Mothers are that way. They love even the “black sheep” in the family and will gladly lay down their life to save it.

Years passed by—ten, twenty, thirty.

Andy never returned, and no one knew what had become of him.

Mother died still waiting for her prodigal son to return.

Sandy had now become a great consulting engineer, traveling from coast to coast, and sometimes even called to foreign lands.

Now it happened that one fall and winter he directed a great dam-building project in Montana. And it so happened that one stormy winter night on his way to the office he collided with an old man dressed in rags. The man had lost his way in the blizzard.

Somehow the tramp interested Sandy.

He invited him into his own spacious rooms.

The poor fellow crawled to the stove and fairly hugged it in an effort to thaw himself out. And as he did so, Sandy scrutinized him closely.

The tramp was about the same height as himself, dark, with a red nose, blood-shot eyes, blotched complexion, scars here and there on his face—a wretched sight indeed.

Suddenly the eyes of the tramp began to bulge, as if in deathly fear. He had seen Sandy's name on an envelope which the mail carrier had placed on his desk that afternoon.

The tramp stared, first at the letter, then at Sandy, and then he assumed his brazen, sneaky attitude again, as if trying to hide his thoughts.

But a terrible conviction dawned upon the mind of the engineer.

"Who are you?" he exclaimed fiercely. "Are you Andy, my brother?"

The tramp did not answer. Instead he rushed to the door, flung it open and ran pell-mell into the storm.

"Andy! Andy!" his brother called. He ran out into the blizzard, bare-headed and coatless as he was. He called for half a dozen men and sent them in different directions to capture the tramp, but they returned an hour later. They had not found a trace of the stranger.

Andy had run away a second time.

But Sandy, his brother, wept and prayed for him that night. Toward morning he fell into a fitful sleep and dreamed that his mother stood beside him, smiling and kind as of old. And when he awoke, he repeated to himself slowly the commandment he had learned as a boy:

"Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not kill.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear and love God so that we do our neighbor no bodily harm, nor cause him any suffering, but help and befriend him in every need.

JIM'S STORY.

I wish I would not need to tell you Jim's story.

I would much rather tell you about Robert Eaton and Samuel Anderson and Russell Berg and other fine lads I knew, who through love of God and man have become useful in this world.

But Jim's story too must be recorded, as a warning to us all.

Jim was a boy like other boys—strong, lively, playful. He lived with his parents in a humble home on Arch Street. Only four rooms in the house, but four rooms of topsy-turvy happiness and laughter and mischief when Jim was around.

Jim was freckle-faced, of course, blue-eyed, and tousle-haired. He could eat a whole apple-pie alone, and he hated to be washed behind his ears. So, you see, in every way he was a boy.

Now it happened one day at school that Jim and William Mann, the banker's son, got into a fight, just like Tom and the other William, of whom I told you.

William had said something insulting to Jim, and Jim had returned the compliment with interest, and then there was a battle.

Nothing unusual about that, I know, but somehow the incident became a seed of hate in Jim's heart. He could neither forget nor forgive the insult of William Mann.

You have seen a dandelion seed, have you not? It is a little, almost invisible grain, attached to a few cotton-like hairs. It soars through the air and settles perhaps on that wonderful little patch of lawn on the south side of your house. It creeps between the blades of grass into the earth. It begins to sprout. It grows, and in a few weeks you have a big, ugly dandelion where there was only clover before. And the dandelion spreads its long, jagged leaves over the grass and smothers it.

Jim's hate for William Mann was only a little seed to begin with, but it crept into his heart. And it sprouted and grew larger.

Jim knew it was wrong to hate, and for a time he tried halfheartedly to weed the foul thing out of his heart, but he soon gave up, and instead enjoyed to turn over in his mind and imagination all the insults and injuries which he would like to heap upon his enemy.

"I'd like to beat him up a hundred times," he said to himself. "I'd like to lick him until he couldn't walk for weeks and weeks!"

Jim went to Sunday school, and so he knew that God forbids hatred, but he would not listen to that. Instead he hardened his heart, lost interest in Jesus, and soon stopped going to Sunday school and to church altogether.

Years passed by.

The hate in Jim's heart was now a full-grown plant. Its long, sawtoothed leaves of hate had smothered the finer, sweeter clover-leaves of love in his soul.

And so one day—he and William Mann were seniors in the local high school—for the twentieth time, I do believe, he and William fought. This time it happened in a dark alley.

In the scuffle Jim struck William with a sharp iron which the evil one had put just within his reach at the right moment. William fell to the pavement unconscious and in that same instant Jim felt the fierce grip of a policeman on the nape of his neck.

And now Jim sits in a prison cell. He has broken the heart of father and mother. He has brought upon himself the ill-will and condemnation of all his friends. He has filled the home of the Manns with sorrow, for William died one night as a result of Jim's blow. He has ruined his life. The gallows await him.

I didn't like to tell you all this about Jim, but I had to, because it is true, and because I am afraid that there are many Jims in the world, Jims who forget that Jesus said: "Who-soever hateth his brother is a murderer," Jims who allow hate to grow in their hearts until it smothers all the finer feelings within them and makes monsters of them.

So if you feel the seed of hate taking root in your heart to-day, remember Jim, and ask God to pull the foul weed out of your heart by the roots, no matter how it hurts!

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear and love God so that we lead a chaste and pure life in word and deed, and that husband and wife love and honor each other.

A PURE LIFE.

It was their golden wedding day.

Grandpa and grandma got up early, as their custom was, and sat near the window a while watching the glory of the dawn melt before the rising sun and listening to the birds twittering "good morning" in the elm-tree yonder.

"Fifty years ago today!" grandma whispered softly.

Grandpa drew her closer to him.

"Yes, fifty years ago!" he repeated wistfully.

Gradually the city was awakening. There were footfalls on the walk. The milk-boy whistled. The automobile horns began to bark raucously. Someone laughed shrilly down the street. But grandpa and grandma heard only the music of a wedding march echoing through fifty years of joy and sorrow, fifty years of happiness, fifty years of love.

Fifty years ago, this very day, they were married in the little log cabin church down by Landow's Lake. There's a summer resort on the spot now.

Fifty years ago—

A door slammed in the big house in front. (Grandpa and

grandma live in the little cosy cottage in the back part of the lot.) Someone ran down the board walk. There was a loud knock on their door, but the person opened it before they had time to turn their heads from the sunrise.

It was Elsie, of course—jolly, brown-eyed Elsie, the cheeriest of their twelve granddaughters.

"I come to congratulate you," Elsie said, as if she was reading something by heart. "Mother will be here to see you soon. She sent these cakes for your breakfast."

Elsie placed a large pan, covered with a napkin, on the table.

Then, standing in the middle of the floor, she looked a long time at the two by the window. Grandpa's trembling hand rested peacefully on grandma's shoulder. Grandma was almost smiling. They looked for all the world like two lovers, Elsie thought. And just then the sun flooded their faces with its glow. The sun too seemed to know that this was indeed a golden day!

Finally grandma arose and walked to the table.

She peeped under the napkin.

"Oh, what wonderful cakes!" she exclaimed joyfully. "Now I must put the coffeepot on the stove right away!"

While grandma tinkered away by the stove, Elsie sat down on the window-sill close to grandpa.

She seemed to have something on her mind, something very hard to explain.

"Grandpa!" she exclaimed at last. "How did you two get together?"

Grandpa turned his face toward his granddaughter, looked at her curious face for a moment, then he smiled a broad, understanding smile.

"Do you really want to know?" he chuckled.

"Sure!"

He glanced furtively at grandma, but she was very busy with her coffee pot.

"All right!" grandpa agreed, still smiling. "I'll tell the story. It happened this way. When I was twenty I left the old country on a big boat. Then I took the train to a little town in southern Minnesota. It was pioneer country then. One of my father's old friends lived on a homestead there, and I had to walk six miles from the station to his place."

Grandpa paused.

"Yes, go on!" Elsie urged impatiently.

"Well, the road was muddy, but I got there finally and I was well received. I remember it as if it were today—I got dumplings for dinner and I ate two dozen of them at least. Hungry as a bear after that walk in the mud, you see. And after dinner I noticed that the girl washing the dishes, one of the neighbor girls, I afterward found out, had sparkling eyes and pink cheeks and—well, I liked the way she washed those dishes too, so I asked her about a year later if she wouldn't wash dishes for me—and she has done so ever since!"

"Yes sirree!" grandma interrupted laughing, placing the steaming coffee pot on the table. "And she has washed a couple of million cups and saucers since then, I do believe. But come now, breakfast is ready!"

"It must be wonderful to be in love for fifty years," Elsie remarked thoughtfully as the three seated themselves at the table.

Instead of answering grandpa and grandma looked at one another, smiled, and then both looked at Elsie and smiled again.

It was their golden wedding day.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not steal.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear and love God so that we do not rob our neighbor of his money or property, nor bring them into our possession by unfair dealing or fraud, but help him to improve and protect his property and living.

OLD DIEGO.

"Apples! Or'nges! B'nanners!"

It was the doleful voice of old Diego, the fruit peddler.

His nag, of a color exactly that of a discarded dishrag, and with head bent low as if in shame, trudged heavily along the street. The cart clattered and squeaked. Old Diego blew his nose and then started his harangue again.

"Apples! Grapes! Pears! All kindsa fruit!"

Old Diego's face was sullen, his black eyes seemed dull and blood-shot and worried, his moustaches drooped.

One could see that he had sold very little this day.

The avenue turned to the right.

A patch of park with green lawn and trees emerged like an oasis out of the desert of brick and cobble-stones and cement blocks. The old nag lifted one ear and ran a few steps.

Five minutes later old Diego tied her to a telephone post. Then he walked a few yards into the little park and lay himself down upon the soft grass in the shade of an elm.

It was about half past four in the afternoon.

Just as old Diego dozed off under the tree, Tom and Otis and Claribel and the other children passed by on their way home from school.

"Ssh!" said Otis.

Then he pointed at old Diego asleep under the tree and then at the cart and then he winked one eye.

Tom understood and winked back.

The children walked softly and silently to the cart.

The nag still dozed too, her nose resting on the curb.

Tom and Otis and three or four others who happened to be near lost no time in filling their pockets with oranges and apples and bananas, whatever fruit they liked best. In another minute they had vanished.

Old Diego awoke with a start.

"I wonder I hope not!" he mumbled to himself as he arose and hurried to the cart.

"I should have known better!" he growled fiercely, for he saw at once that his fears were well-founded.

"They've stolen for five dollars!" he moaned, as he untied the halter.

"Giddap!"

Old Diego's cart clattered down the street again.

"Or'nges! Apples! B'naners!" he called in his dismal nasal twang.

That evening Tom and Otis, on their way to Leland's house, happened to pass a tumbledown shack on one of the side streets. It was a gray house with a puddle of gray mud in the middle of a gray lawn in front of it and surrounded by a gray wooden fence, whose slats leaned in all directions.

"No butter on our bread today, Gloria!" they heard a familiar voice exclaim. "And you, Gregory, won't get any dime for your bike this week."

"Why not, grandpa?" cried a boy and a girl in unison, with tears in their voices.

"Because some mean kids stole a couple of dollars worth from me today!" old Diego explained sadly.

"Let's go, quick!" Otis whispered.

The two lads hurried shamefacedly away.

Somehow they had lost interest in their plans for the evening. Without a word between them they walked up one side of the street and then down the other. Finally Tom stopped.

"I'm going in here," he said, pointing at the brilliant window of Nicola's Confectionery.

"I just thought of the same thing myself," Otis exclaimed.

They happened to have three dollars between them. For this they bought oranges, apples, bananas—the best they could find, and a few chocolate bars beside.

Ten minutes later they placed two large paper bags on old Diego's porch. They knocked at the door. They heard feet shuffling toward it.

But when old Diego peered out, he saw no one—only the two bags leaning against the threshold.

"There's a God in heaven after all!" he exclaimed as he stopped down and examined the contents of the bags. "The stolen fruit has come back to me."

Then he saw the chocolate bars.

"Gloria! Gregory! Come here right away!" old Diego called enthusiastically.

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear and love God so that we do not deceitfully belie, betray, backbite, nor slander our neighbor, but apologize for him, speak well of him, and put the most charitable construction on all that he does.

STEWART BLACKMORE'S CASE.

"D'you see that fellow in front of us?" Roger whispered half aloud in Oliver's ear.

Oliver nodded.

"D'you know who he is?"

Oliver hesitated.

"Nope!" he said.

"It's Stewart Blackmore!"

"Oh yes, Stewart Blackmore," Oliver remarked. "I met him the other day at Henry's house, but what of him?"

"Oh, haven't you heard?"

Roger seemed very much surprised.

"Heard what?"

"Well, that fellow in front of us, dressed like a fashion plate—you would never think it looking at him, but he's a thief—maybe."

"A thief!"

"Yessir, a thief! Or a robber would perhaps be the more

correct word. You see, it's this way. He works at the First National Bank, and a week ago they missed ten thousand dollars or so from their safe, and—well, Tom Perkins told me that he understood that there were strong suspicions—”

Roger pointed significantly toward the young man in front of them.

The suspicions around Stewart Blackmore thickened and the story grew into an enormity like the Genii in Arabian Nights, even though there was really no foundation for it. It was mere hearsay or circumstantial evidence, but just the same, about a week after the conversation between Oliver and Roger, some pretext was found to arrest the poor boy.

The newspapers spread the story far and wide. Stewart Blackmore suffered untold agonies in his prison cell, while Roger, Oliver, and their likes, supposed friends of Stewart's, were exclaiming:

“I told you so, didn't I?”

“Who ever heard of such a thing!”

“Isn't it awful about that Blackmore boy!”

“It is as I have always said, ‘Pride goes before a fall’!”

And as they spoke thus, they enjoyed it, because they felt themselves to be so good and honest in comparison to Stewart.

But life is not always unjust and cruel to the innocent.

When Stewart had languished in jail for about ten days, a sheriff somewhere in central Illinois caught a young burglar who after some grilling confessed that he had stolen the money from the First National Bank. His confession proved Stewart Blackmore to be innocent of the robbery. He was set free with profuse apologies and given a raise of salary at the bank.

About a week later it happened that Roger and Oliver again were walking down the same street.

“I have felt mean about this Stewart Blackmore case a long while,” Roger confessed.

"So have I!" Oliver agreed emphatically.

"I feel like a thief myself for even suspecting Stewart. You remember how I told the story to you and I did the same to a score of others. I have been stealing Stewart's reputation!"

"Yes, and I was your accomplice. I listened to you," Oliver said sadly. "And I didn't apologize for Stewart at all. I rather enjoyed hearing you and others tearing his character and good name to pieces, and when they finally put him in jail, I said, 'Isn't that too bad,' but I didn't mean it at all."

The two walked in silence a long while.

"I guess the eighth commandment is more important than I thought," Roger remarked finally. "I think I am going to turn a new leaf and instead of raising 'injurious reports' I'll do some 'charitable construction'!"

"Shake on that!" Oliver exclaimed, grasping his comrade's hand. "Here's one who'll do the same!"

Just then they met Stewart Blackmore, and for months he recalled with joy the cheery greeting and the sunny smiles which the two young men had given him in passing that day.

"I have friends after all," he told himself with great satisfaction.

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear and love God so that we do not seek by craftiness to gain possession of our neighbor's inheritance or home, nor abstain them under pretense of a legal right, but assist and serve him in keeping the same.

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his cattle, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

What does this mean?

Answer: We should fear and love God so that we do not estrange or entice away our neighbor's wife, servants, or cattle, but seek to have them remain and discharge their duty to him.

THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE GRAY.

I was trudging along the road leading to Manville. The July sun poured buckets of hot air over me. I was in misery.

But suddenly I heard a cheerful voice say, "Whoa! Want a ride, my lad?"

By the sound of that voice I knew that my sufferings were over.

I looked up into a kind, bearded face. And then I saw

a comfortable seat in the buggy, for this happened in the good old days, and I needed no further invitation.

"I am pastor Wollmar," said the venerable gentleman.

I told him my name and my errand, that I was a stranger in that section of the country and that I intended to catch the evening train for Minneapolis.

Pastor Wollmar smiled. I climbed to the seat beside him, and Maud swished her tail as she jogged along the road.

I don't remember what we chatted about to begin with, but I can never forget the scene which unexpectedly lay before us as we emerged out of a shady grove of oaks and elms.

Imagine two farmsteads on two little knolls with a brook between them.

One of them was surrounded by a green fence. The lawn around the house was clipped close and flowers bloomed in the borders. The big barn down by the brook glowed with fresh red paint and the white house on the knoll above it gleamed like a snowdrift.

The other farmstead was hemmed in by a rusty barb-wire fence, the posts leaning in all directions. The barn was a low, unpainted shed in the midst of heaps of filth, and the old dilapidated house seemed ready to fall into a heap. The lawn was a thicket of weeds where scraggly hens scratched and wallowed, and there was not a flower in sight.

Pastor Wollmar noticed the astonishment in my eyes as I compared the two homes.

"There's a story back of that," he said, waving his hand in the direction of the white house and the gray. "As we jog along, I will tell you about it.

"I have been pastor in this community for over thirty years. I know my people well, too well, some think."

He smiled whimsically.

"Well, it must have been about twenty-five years ago," he

continued, "that Tom Wagner and Jim Nelson married and moved to the farms we just passed. Tom lives in the white house. Jim in the gray. Both have about the same kind of soil to till and the same number of acres. Both get the same sunshine and rain. Both of them began life with about the same gifts and opportunities. Why then the vast difference between them now? you might ask. I'll tell you in a few words. Tom is a cheerful, charitable fellow, looking at the sunny side of life always. Jim is gloomy, envious, often hateful.

"On the very day Jim moved into his house, he began to look through the window toward Tom's place with yellow envy in his heart. 'I believe Moore sold Tom better lumber than he did me,' he remarked to me the first time I called. And that tune he has been singing ever since. He never steals from Tom, but he is always accusing everybody of favoring Tom more than they favor Jim. I have even heard him accuse our heavenly Father of sending a richer shower over Tom's pasture than over his. Tom can't buy a horse but Jim feels bad over it because his own horse cannot compare with Tom's. Jim and his wife and his children too are all driving in that rut. They are always envious, covetous, moody. As a result they are also lazy and somehow never able to make wise plans. And the result you saw a while ago. Twenty-five years of covetousness has not brought Jim and his home a single blessing. Godliness with contentment is great gain. The devil pays the poorest wages of all."

I have never forgotten Pastor Wollmar's words. I have never forgotten those two homes, the white house and the gray. And ever since that ride with Pastor Wollmar I have understood the meaning of the word "covet" and the reasons why God has used two commandments to forbid the sin called covetousness.

THE CONCLUSION.

What does God declare concerning all these Commandments?

Answer: He says: I the *Lord* thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments.

What does this mean?

Answer: God threatens to punish all who transgress these commandments. We should, therefore, fear His wrath, and in no wise disobey them. But He promises grace and every blessing to all who keep them. We should, therefore, love Him, trust in Him, and gladly keep His commandments.

JUSTICE AND MERCY.

"Harry! Loretta!"

The frantic voice with which mother called them could mean only one thing.

Father was coming home drunk again.

It was begining to happen altogether too often of late.

The two children rushed into the kitchen. Tears were streaming down mother's face but there was a strange determination about her lips.

"Hurry! Come with me!" she exclaimed, as she handed the children their hats and coats.

As the father in drunken stupor climbed the ten steps to the porch the mother and the children ran out the back way.

"We'll go over to sister's for a while," said mother.

All this while Harry and Loretta had not whimpered. They were only six and eight years of age but their father's vice and their mother's sorrow had already made them old and silent before their time.

Father stumbled into the home.

"Hey, there!" he shouted.

"Hey, there!" he shouted again.

When no one answered he began to curse. He fell against the kitchen table. This made him angry. With one sweep of his hand he hurtled all the dishes with their contents down on the floor.

Then, as if ashamed of what he had done, he left the room.

A moment later he climbed down the steps to the street again.

He tried to cross Bozeman Avenue. A truck speeding by struck him like a thunder-bolt. In the next instant he lay upon the pavement bleeding, unconscious.

A messenger came to sister's place.

"Your father was run over. He's at the hospital. Perhaps dead."

Now, finally, Harry and Loretta were able to weep. Father had been kind to them often. He was a prince among men when he was sober. Drink made him a monster.

"Perhaps dead!" they repeated.

And mother too wept as they were rushed off to the hospital in uncle's car.

But their tears should have been tears of joy, as we shall soon see.

Father lay on his back for days and weeks. The fever of infection made him delirious. His right leg was so mangled

that it had to be amputated. He lost some of the fingers on his left hand. There were some internal injuries which pained him terribly.

But slowly, inch by inch, he grew better. It was a great day when he spoke again. His voice seemed so sad and strange and frightened.

He was not as talkative as he used to be, Loretta thought. Mother and he had long talks by themselves, however. So his tongue hadn't been hurt. Something else was wrong—or right, maybe.

When he was brought home and the family ate their first meal together for many a month, tears welled up in father's eyes and he spoke to them all as he had never spoken before.

"I am sincerely sorry over my sin," he said. "Drink made a cripple of me. Drink made paupers of you before and will do so hereafter."

"Oh, don't speak that way, daddy!" mother exclaimed bravely. "You still have your mind. You still can work. God will help you."

For a long while father did not answer.

"Yes, maybe so," he said at last. "I read in the Holy Book of God in the hospital every day. I read about God visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and the fourth generation, but showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Him and keep His commandments!"

Mother's face beamed through the tears as the sun beams through the clouds after a summer rain.

"Yes, father dear. Before we suffered from *iniquity*; now we shall be shown *mercy*."

The words were a bit beyond the understanding of the children, but it was obvious to them that somehow through that terrible accident God had come into their home, and they were happy.

Yes, and happy ever after, because father and mother opened a little store and the neighbors patronized them and helped them in every way. The business grew, and father was able to get around almost the same as ever, first with his crutch and then with his artificial leg.

He never touched a drop of liquor again. He was a changed man and a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and God showed mercy and kindness to him and to his wife and his children.

The Creed

In the plain form in which the head of
the family shall teach it to his household



*“By faith Abraham, being tried,
offered up Isaac”*

THE FIRST ARTICLE.

OF CREATION.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

Answer: I believe that God has created me and all that exists; that He has given and still preserves to me my body and soul, my eyes and ears, and all my members, my reason and all the powers of my soul, together with food and raiment, home and family, and all my property; that He daily provides abundantly for all the needs of my life, protects me from all danger, and guards and keeps me from all evil; and that He does this purely out of fatherly and divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me; for all which I am in duty bound to thank, praise, serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true.

GOD FROM WHOM ALL BLESSINGS FLOW.

I have been very happy now for three whole days.

And you can't guess the reason.

No, I haven't played ball, and I haven't camped out by a lake and gone fishing, and I haven't received a million dollars from my rich uncle.

No, again and again. I have spent three days in travel. And I haven't gone by train or car either and not even afoot,

and I haven't seen the mountains nor the lakes or the rolling hills, except through my mind's eye.

I have done something you can all do with me in a few moments.

I have taken a trip through the Three Articles of Faith, using my imagination as a guide. And this guide has outdone himself in showing me shady dells and babbling brooks and green knolls and swaying forests and mountain peaks piercing the clouds.

Come with me and for your sake I will travel over the very same route once more. Sweet Imagination, be not offended if again I crave thy wise direction!

Thank you!

Now we are on our way.

In heaven I see a God whose majesty and power is like the glory of the sun bursting into my soul. He overwhelms me. I almost fear that His brightness will consume us and destroy us.

But we need not fear.

I believe that God is my Father and your Father and He made us and all that we see about us. He made the high mountains with the snowy glaciers shining in the sun. And he made the blue lakes with the ripples dancing on them, and the fields where the crickets chirp.

Yes, He made all that, and I am happy, but most of all I am thankful that He made us, gave us body and soul and limbs and senses and reason and memory and will and many other wonders. If God had given us a body and nothing else, I am afraid we would be something like the hippopotamus I saw in the park the other day—a big, ugly fellow eating apple peelings with a great noise like the hogs do.

God gave us wonderful bodies, light and tall and swift,

and in those bodies He put a mind with thoughts swifter than lightning to be their messengers.

I need not go to Yellowstone or the Himalayas to find the greatest wonders in the world. No, I am myself the greatest wonder of all—my nerves, my blood-vessels, the clear vision of my eye, the delicacy of my ear, the calm of my reason, the exhilaration of my imagination.

This body of mine needs food and clothing and a thousand other things, and He provides me daily with all I need. I can right now see a table decked for a feast, with stuffed turkey and pumpkin pie and mashed potatoes and steaming coffee or, if I prefer, a sparkling glass filled with milk as white as snow. Sometimes I don't need as much as that, and then He gives me a slice of bread and butter.

And as for clothes, think of all the thousand colors and shades of colors, blue and green and white and orange and yellow and red. At this very moment I look out through my window and I see scores of children passing by and just now I see red and green and white and blue caps and brown and green and tan and black coats, and the grass is green and the sky is blue and the house across the way is white and those on either side are buff and maroon.

God has given us all these things, and not only that, He protects us and provides for us and guides us as long as we live in this world, which is a wonderful world but also a dangerous one indeed. How well I remember my chum Willie, a lad with a smile like a spring morning. Then years ago he skated on the lake, fell through the ice, and was drowned. And little Alice, she of the golden curls, caught a cold one wintry day, began to cough, coughed often—and one morning the little hands no longer moved, and the eyelids were closed in death. And I remember Tom Drummond who was killed by a run-away horse, and scores of other accidents.

This is a dangerous world, but you and I are still alive. Why? Because our Father has protected us and will protect us until the day when we too must leave this world for one that is better.

In that world there shall be still greater glories, loftier mountain peaks piercing into bluer skies, and lakes like one vast sapphire, and, best of all, no one shall slip down those mountain sides to death below, and no one shall drown in those sparkling lakes, and no one shall weep, and no one shall die. Here we merely prepare ourselves for that more beautiful land which our Father will give us.

What a wonderful Father we have!

And why does He do all these things for us?

Surely not because we are so good and kind that we deserve it all? Oh no! Thank God for that! If we received only what we have earned, we would all perish. But God loves us as our mother and father love us and because of this great love He gives us out of the abundance of His treasures until we must gasp in amazement.

Gasped I say! Yes, but not only that. I feel sure that all of us this morning in gratitude to our heavenly Father wish to join in singing:

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him all creatures here below,
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host,
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

And after we have praised Him thus with our lips we read His will in the Commandments and in our consciences and we say, "Yes, Father, we wish to serve Thee. We love Thee and we want to prove that we love Thee." And after that again we go out and in among friends and strangers, we speak

a kind word there, we smile to the sad face yonder, we help that old lady to cross the busy street, we climb the long stairs to see the lonely, the sick, and the needy, and our hearts are filled with joy, because we know that our Father loves us and accepts the little offering of thanksgiving which in the name of Jesus we place before His throne.

This is most certainly true.

THE SECOND ARTICLE.

OF REDEMPTION.

I believe in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

What does this mean?

Answer: I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true Man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord; who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, bought me and freed me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with silver and gold, but with His holy and precious blood, and with His innocent sufferings and death; in order that I might be His own, live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness; even as He is risen from the dead, and lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true.

JESUS, MY REDEEMER.

God is love.

And God proved to us His father love when He made heaven and earth and man and all that exists. What a wonderful love it was we saw yesterday as we made our journey through the First Article of our Faith.

After all, God showed His love best when He sent His only-begotten Son into the world.

You remember when you were a tiny tot, how the story of the babe in Bethlehem brought smiles of joy to your face and filled your heart with a heavenly gladness. I have read many books in my day and heard of many mysteries and wonders, but the greatest of them all to me is this: God became a little babe, just as you and I were babes once. And He became a boy who worked and played and learned and prayed, just as I did when I was a boy. And He became a young man, powerful in body and soul. And He was baptized and He became the Son of Man and went about preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, winning disciples, healing the sick, comforting the distressed.

He was true man, born of the Virgin Mary, but also true God, begotten of the Father from eternity.

This, my beloved, is the greatest wonder in the world to me. Now, certainly, I love God, who not only made me but Himself became like me.

Thrice happy ought I to be, for what would have happened to me if He had not come?

I would have been a lost creature, my sins would have overwhelmed me and drowned me in their filth. But God loved me and sent Jesus to save me from the quicksand and the dismal slough.

He saved me, He redeemed me, not paying for my ransom with silver and gold. Oh no! He died on the cross for me,

He arose from the grave for me, and He went up into heaven for me.

I may know for sure that my sins are forgiven. I can believe with all my heart that, wonderful as this world is, it cannot begin to compare with the world which I shall see when I arise from the grave. I can be courageous, because in heaven itself Jesus is praying for me, waiting for me, preparing a room for me.

Some day I am going to depart from this world of sin and disappointment and sorrow and death. But I am not going to enter into a dark country then. Instead I am going to leave the night behind me and cross over into a land of bliss where the face of God shall be my light and I shall dwell with Him forever.

Believing this, whom or what should I fear? I am more than a conqueror through Jesus Christ! My sins are ever before me, but so is also the redeeming love of the Saviour. God is great, and His majesty would destroy me if I did not know that He loves me and sent His own Son into the world to save me, to be the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.

Three crosses stand on a bleak hill.

On the cross to the left and the cross to the right hang two robbers, one who curses and one who prays. On the cross in the center, One whose face shines like that of an angel, Whose lips even in death pray for His enemies.

Toward that cross all humanity is coming. "If I be lifted up," He said, "I will draw all men unto me!" He is lifted up and He draws unto Himself, out of the vast multitude of human beings, those who want to be saved and blessed forever. This is most certainly true.

Dear crucified Lord, draw us unto Thyself, nearer, nearer, blessed Lord, nearer to Thee!

THE THIRD ARTICLE.

OF SANCTIFICATION.

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints; the Forgiveness of sins; the Resurrection of the body; and the Life everlasting. Amen.

What does this mean?

Answer: I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith; in which Christian Church He daily forgives abundantly all my sins, and the sins of all believers, and at the last day will raise up me and all the dead, and will grant everlasting life to me and to all who believe in Christ. This is most certainly true.

THE SPIRIT THAT MAKES HOLY.

Now we have spent two mornings journeying through the first and second Articles of Faith and dawn of the third morning is splashing its gold over the eastern sky.

It is a glorious spring morning.

Only a few weeks ago all the earth lay dead and gray, like a very old and very dirty rug, covering meadow and glen, hill and dale. I thought for sure the last cold winter had killed all the green grass and all the pretty flowers of last year.

But I was all wrong.

The spring sun came, and it was very sweet and warm, and the snow melted away, and the gray sward turned pale green, and here and there tiny stalks began to sprout and the willow began to look as if tiny kitties were crawling up its slender twigs.

Oh the power of the spring sun! It charms life into dead nature! It exhilarates our hearts, until we sing and chirp almost like the birds do.

It seems to me today as if the Third Article were the story of a Spring Morning.

Long ago our forefathers were heathen warriors roaming through the forests of Scandinavia and Germany and England and France. Their hearts were like the gray earth before spring came. They worshiped a god, but it was a god of blood and hate.

When the missionaries came preaching the gospel of Christ it was like the magic shafts of the sun. It made the cold hearts warm. It made the dead eyes bright.

Like a spring wind the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus, crept into every nook and corner and touched the seeds of love and truth and mercy and hope and faith, and these seeds began to sprout, send roots into the ground and blades into the air, and become plants.

The Church was established in almost every city and village and even out in the open country. Here the Word was preached. Here hymns were sung. Here children and old folks too were baptized and here the Holy Supper of the Lord was celebrated.

Thus, through the Church, the Holy Spirit called our forefathers, as He is calling us today, out of heathen darkness into His glorious light. He not only calls and gathers and enlightens but also sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth. That means this: just as the sun and the rain not only bring the plant to life but also charm it into flower first and then into the maturity of fruit-bearing, so the Holy Spirit works upon our heart until we become full-grown, fruit-bearing Christians.

A little child saying prayers at nightfall is a beautiful character, but so is also, and perhaps more so, the old grandmother smiling from her Bible at eventide.

Not only that, the Holy Spirit will continue His work until all have heard the message of salvation, until all those who believe shall have everlasting life, the life Jesus died to bring to us.

Now I have traveled through the Three Articles of our Faith with you. We have seen glimpses of the glory of God on the way. Some of the stories we heard as we journeyed through that part of the King's Garden which we call the Ten Commandments were a little depressing. But now we feel happier, because although we human beings, boys and girls and men and women, are often quarreling and fighting and cursing and hating and murdering and filling the world with the noise of our evil hearts, we need not worry! God created us. God sent His Son to save us. God sent His Holy Spirit to make us holy. The devil is at work in this world, but God is mightier and—"this is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith!" This is most certainly true.

The Lord's Prayer

In the plain form in which the head of
the family shall teach it to his household



“After this manner therefore pray ye”

THE INTRODUCTION.

Our Father, Who art in heaven.

What does this mean?

Answer: God thereby tenderly encourages us to believe that He is truly our Father, and that we are truly His children, so that we may boldly and confidently come to Him in prayer, even as beloved children come to their dear father.

STEPPING GODWARD.

"One step! Fine, lad! Now try again!"
It's father speaking to little Jim,
And Jim lets go of the kitchen chair,
Looks up toward father—and *falls* toward him.

One step, two steps, and many more—
And soon Jim walks like a little man,
Grows stronger, steadier day by day:
Such is the story since life began.

God in heaven holds out His hands
Toward you and me, and like little Jim,
Step by step and prayer by prayer,
We stumble upward and on—toward Him.

THE FIRST PETITION.

Hallowed be Thy name.

What does this mean?

Answer: God's Name is indeed holy in itself; but we pray in this petition that it may be hallowed also among us.

How is this done?

Answer: When the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we, as God's children, lead holy lives, in accordance with it. This grant us, dear Father in heaven! But whoever teaches and lives otherwise than as God's Word teaches, profanes the Name of God among us. From this preserve us, heavenly Father.

ALONE WITH GOD.

It was the day after our confirmation.

George and I decided that we would make a little excursion into the Trout Creek country. Our thoughts were all about the flashing inhabitants of the stream and about rustling leaves and shadows chasing one another under the trees, but they were soon to be of a different sort, as you shall see.

Trout Creek passes about five or six miles from our town, and in those days when the horse and buggy was the speediest vehicle on the country roads we did not know so much about

the world as boys and girls do today. George and I had never seen the wooded hills in the Trout Creek country before.

About half a mile from the stream the road made a sudden turn into an open, sunny space, in the center of which someone had built a log cabin with a little porch of rough-hewn boards in front. And on that porch sat an old man in a very ancient easy-chair with a large book in front of him.

He had evidently noticed the surprised look on our faces.

"Good morning, boys," he greeted us. "Won't you come up and talk a while to a lonely old man before you disturb the sharp-fins in their lair."

By the twinkle in his eyes we knew that he was not lonely at all but nevertheless really would enjoy a chat, and we were tired from the long walk. So we sat down on the porch-steps.

In our conversation we happened to mention that our trip was more or less a reward for doing fairly well on the great day before. The old man nodded and seemed very pleased and then he began a sermon which neither George nor I have ever forgotten.

As he talked he turned the pages of his Bible, and then he arose and lead us through the two rooms in the cabin, which were very bare of furniture but wonderfully clean. He had a table, chairs, a stove, a cupboard, a bed, but that was about all. Only one picture hung on the wall, a rather faded print showing Christ praying in the garden.

"Do you live here all alone?" George asked him.

The old man smiled benignly.

"Yes and no!" he exclaimed. "No human being lives with me here, to be sure, but I am not alone for all that."

We looked a little puzzled, so he continued:

"Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and the prophets and the apostles live with me and, dearest of all, the Son of Man Himself."

The old man sat down in the easy-chair again and turned the pages of the Book, and George and I made ourselves comfortable on the steps as a moment before.

"God is everywhere around us," he spoke again. "He fills these woods with the mystery of His presence. I feel that He is beside us now, blessing us. When I work in my garden or milk my two cows or when, like yourselves, I take time off for a little walk up the creek, He is with me every step I take. They say that old men like myself who live alone become peculiar, but—well, I am not alone, and so I hope I am not peculiar."

He smiled and we smiled too.

"Now, my lads, you have just been confirmed. You have just begun a long journey through life, a far longer and more tiresome journey than to old Martin's place on Trout Creek. You were told by your pastor to hallow the name of the Lord and to live always as in His presence. If you do, he said, then you will be happy. Now I hope you don't think I am boastful, because I am merely telling you the truth. I have stumbled along in the Master's footsteps for nigh on seventy years now, although I have never been rich, I have never starved, and I have always been happy. When the pastor spoke to you it sounded a little unreal, perhaps, this about life in the Saviour. I want to tell you that three-score years and ten have convinced me that it is more real and more beautiful than that sky up yonder or those roses on the bush by the gate."

That's about all I remember from that sermon but I have never forgotten the old man in the cabin near Trout Creek. Whenever I wonder if it pays to love the Lord, I think of him and then faith blooms again in my heart.

THE SECOND PETITION.

Thy kingdom come.

What does this mean?

Answer: The kingdom of God comes indeed of itself, without our prayer; but we pray in this petition that it may also come to us.

How is this done?

Answer: When our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word, and live a godly life here on earth, and in heaven for ever.

PARSON BROWN BRINGS THE KINGDOM TO COYOTE BUTTE.

Parson Brown rode into Coyote Butte in a snowstorm.

Six log houses in a cleft of the mountains was Coyote Butte in those days, and of the six two were saloons. Wilderness surrounded the post and wilderness flourished within it. Coyotes howled behind Parson Brown as he rode into the town, and coyotes of a different kind were there to meet him.

In twenty minutes the inhabitants of Coyote Butte knew that a new person had arrived and that the new person was a sky-pilot.

A sky-pilot!

Parson Brown noticed the smiles and jeers, the mysterious nudgings, and he heard the jokes which were cracked at his expense, but he smiled through it all.

He stood with his back to the rusty stove, his eyes twinkling, his face beaming love toward the sin-laden people around him.

"In a week we'll run him out of town," the boys of the Diamond X Bar boasted.

But in a week Parson Brown had won them, and although the pulpit was a barrel and the pews were rough-hewn boards, and although many of those present were not entirely sober—the first sermon was the first web of invisible threads which fastened those straying souls to the throne of God.

When Parson Brown rode into the town that wintry night his hair was black and his beard was brown and he walked tall and straight and he rode a bronco as bravely and well as any man in the mountains.

Today Parson Brown is crooked and old, and his hair and beard are white as snow, but his blue eyes twinkle with the same brilliancy of love with which they glowed thirty years ago.

When Parson Brown rode into the town, Coyote Butte deserved its name. Packs of wolves howled in the mountains above it and human wolves howled within it.

But today Coyote Butte is a little mountain village with two or three long streets lined with humble but happy homes, and on the highest spot therein stands a church as white as the snow which fell on Parson Brown's leather cap and jacket thirty years ago.

As you enter the city and drive upward you will notice that the houses become brighter and whiter the closer you come to the church, which is the whitest of all.

And if you stay a while, you will soon see Parson Brown walk down the street to the post office, and you will notice children flocking around him, and men lifting their hats to him as he passes by, and housewives smiling to him from the

doorway, and you will know, without being told, that when Parson Brown rode into Coyote Butte in that snowstorm thirty years ago he brought with him into that wild mountain town the Kingdom of God. And that Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom.

THE THIRD PETITION.

Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

What does this mean?

Answer: The good and gracious will of God is done indeed without our prayer; but we pray in this petition that it may also be done among us.

How is this done?

Answer: When God destroys and brings to naught every evil counsel and purpose of the devil, the world, and our own flesh, which would hinder us from hallowing His Name, and prevent the coming of His kingdom; and when He strengthens us and keeps us steadfast in His Word and in faith, even unto our end. This is His good and gracious will.

LOLA'S AMBITION AND GOD'S WILL.

"Some day Lola will be a prima donna, a grand opera star," father would boast.

And then he would dream of his girl standing on the stage dressed in a gown glittering with diamonds. The orchestra played, the characters of the opera sang, and clear like a bell the voice of Lola rang through the theatre. When the song was ended applause like thunder shook the walls, and Lola smiled toward the box where sat mother and father.

But mother trembled whenever father told of his dreams to her.

She thought of the great city with its many temptations, especially to a famous singer. She thought of the wolves in sheep's clothing who would linger around Lola's dressing room, she thought of the dangerous parties to which she would be invited. She could not bear the thought of her Lola transformed into a butterfly of the stage.

Lola had her dreams too.

She knew that no one in Merryville could sing as she. Not only her father but the doctor and the village mayor had urged her to go to Chicago to study and then to New York and Paris and into the wide world. And ambition tugged wildly at her heart-strings.

But then she thought of mother and her fears, and like a dark abyss the future seemed to yawn before her, anxious to engulf her.

Our dear Father in heaven also had dreams, and they were the best of all.

Lola happened to pass the house of Mrs. Monroe one day. She heard the poor old lady groaning and moaning because Mrs. Monroe was dying from cancer.

And suddenly Lola thought of something.

She ran into the house, and a moment later she sat by the bedside. She held the shriveled hand of the old lady between her own young, rosy fingers, and then she sang, "Rock of Ages," and "Nearer, my God, to Thee," and "Jesus, Lover of My Soul." As Lola sang, Mrs. Monroe seemed to forget her pains. The wrinkles softened. The eyes smiled. Soon she fell fast asleep, and Lola tripped softly out of the room.

"I know what I will do," she told father and mother at the dinner table that day.

Mother did not look up. She only trembled.

Father glanced at his daughter furtively.

"I will sing the songs of Jesus," she announced with beaming eyes.

Then she told about her visit with Mrs. Monroe.

At first father's head sank low in disappointment, but soon father and mother and daughter all looked upward, and the dear Father in heaven looked down and smiled upon them because His dreams of Lola's future were coming true.

THE FOURTH PETITION.

Give us this day our daily bread.

What does this mean?

Answer: Good indeed gives daily bread to all men, even to the wicked, without our prayer; but we pray in this petition that He would lead us to acknowledge our daily bread as His gift, and to receive it with thanksgiving.

What is meant by daily bread?

Answer: Everything that is required to satisfy our bodily needs; such as food and raiment, house and home, fields and flocks, money and goods; pious parents, children and servants; godly and faithful rulers, good government; seasonable weather, peace and health; order and honor; true friends, good neighbors, and the like.

A SERMON ON THE BOY WITH THE HOE.

In the eyes of an artist it would have made a beautiful picture, a lad of twelve or so in blue overalls with a wide-brimmed hat hiding his tousled hair, standing knee-deep in a cornfield of glossy green, a blue sky overhead, a warm, golden sun in the zenith, and a hoe moving to and fro in the moist, sweet-smelling earth.

But in my own eyes I was a most pathetic figure. The overalls were dirty and ragged. The hat felt sharp inside and

the sunbeams crept through a hole near the top. Sweat dripped into my eyes and made them smart, as if from salt and vinegar. The earth was heavy and the weeds tough—and on the parlor table at home lay a book by Captain Marryatt half-read.

I was thoroughly disgusted with life. Hoeing in the cornfield is fine for poets to write about and artists to paint, but for the lad who does it it is work, plain, unvarnished, uninteresting *work*.

I must have worn my thoughts on my face when I came into the kitchen that noon.

For a moment I did not notice that Pastor Warner sat by the window chatting with mother and father.

"What a sour face, Jimmy, my boy!" he exclaimed laughing.

Then I knew I was in for a sermon, and I was.

"One would think that you have a hard life, Jimmy," he began. "You pout and frown like—"

"You would too if you had to hoe all day," I blurted out.

This almost brought me a session in the woodshed afterward, but I had to say it.

"Maybe so, maybe so," smiled Pastor Warner. "I am a good deal like you at times. But, Jimmy, my boy, think of how much you have received from your Father in heaven. You don't like to hoe? I saw little Lambert Moe this morning. He would give half the world if he could hoe corn with you this afternoon. He has been in bed for ten years."

I slumped down in a chair, ashamed of myself.

"And here you have the finest mother and father in the world. Tom Murphy has none at all and is shunted from house to house."

Yes, I knew Tom had to suffer.

'And you have eyes to see the blue sky, and the heavy earth brings you its increase. Did you ever thank God for daily bread?'

"Yes, Pastor Warner," I admitted meekly.

Then I thought of food and raiment, house and home, fields and flocks, money and goods, pious parents, seasonable weather, peace and health, and so on. In my heart I thanked God. My face did not show it, of course, because a boy is proud and will not reveal the fact that a sermon goes home, at least not always.

But that afternoon when I hoed the corn again I whistled a merry tune as I swung the hoe back and forth in the rich, black loam.

THE FIFTH PETITION.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

What does this mean?

Answer: We pray in this petition, that our heavenly Father would not regard our sins nor because of them deny our prayers; for we neither merit nor deserve those things for which we pray; but that He would grant us all things through grace, even though we sin daily, and deserve nothing but punishment. And certainly we, on our part, will heartily forgive, and gladly do good to those who may sin against us.

THE TWO BROTHERS WHO FORGAVE.

Once upon a time there lived among the mountains in the far West two brothers.

Many years before our story begins the two brothers had quarreled and since that day they had never spoken to one another. They would meet quite often at some auction or on the village street, but they never spoke. They had even arranged to live on opposite sides of a mountain.

Now it happened that both were very fond of hunting.

Without knowing of one another the two brothers went hunting on the same October day in the same part of the wooded wilderness. About noon on that crisp day they came

at the same time to a wide open space not far from the top of the mountain. When they saw each other, they were taken by surprise and were about to plunge back into the forest when suddenly something very strange happened.

The hunters' dogs ran to meet each other in the center of the open space. They smelled at each other's noses, and the two masters almost hoped that there might be a fight to relieve the tenseness of the moment, but instead the two dogs began to yelp and run around in most delightful play.

The brothers watched the animals, and the same thought came to both of them.

"Our dogs are friends," they thought, "but we are enemies. These dumb animals will enjoy each other's company, while we, their lords and masters, hate one another."

The two brothers looked at each other across the open space and they read one another's thoughts.

Briskly they walked toward one another, and clasped hands, too moved to speak. As they looked into each other's eyes, all the hate they had harbored for so many years melted as a snow-drift melts before the spring sun.

Finally they were able to speak.

"Forgive me!" they said, both at the same time, and then they embraced, and tears which had been frozen within them began to stream down their cheeks.

And as the brothers forgave one another, God's sun beamed warmly upon them in that wide open space among the fir-trees.

THE SIXTH PETITION.

And lead us not into temptation.

What does this mean?

Answer: God indeed tempts no one to sin; but we pray in this petition that God would so guard and preserve us, that the devil, the world, and our own flesh may not deceive us, nor lead us into error and unbelief, despair and other great and shameful sins; but that, when so tempted, we may finally prevail and gain the victory.

THE AUSTRALIAN CRAWL.

On the way to Sunday school and church Joe had to pass the swimming hole in the Goldenthread River, and that was not an easy matter. He knew it and wondered if he should not do like that man he had read about somewhere, put his fingers in his ears and shut his eyes and run past the place of temptation as fast as possible.

But being a real boy, he could not do that. He would have to fight the thing through with open eyes and ears, and so he did.

He heard splashes and laughter from the river. He could feel the water lapping around his own legs, soft and warm as feathers. His arms and legs ached for a real Australian crawl. He had just learned that stroke the week before.

Temptation tugged fiercely at his soul-strings.

He thought of his catechism lesson and it almost made him

sick, as if he had swallowed a bitter pill. He began to perspire.

"Come! Come! Just one little dip!" the River called to him.

"Oh Joe, the water is fine!" someone shouted to him from the hole.

"Joe, Oh Joe, don't be a Sunday school boy. Be a good sport for once," someone else exclaimed. Very likely it was Verner Bergman, whose father doesn't believe there is a God.

All the while Joe stood still on the road and stared into the swimming hole.

Should he go in or shouldn't he?

If he did, he would have a lot of fun for a while, he would splash about like the rest of the boys and they would think him somewhat of a hero for daring to stay away from Sunday school. It would be a real lark, all right.

But then he would have a sort of sneaky feeling when he put his clothes on again, and when he came home he would have to tell a lie, or else tell the truth and have a session in the wood-shed, or if nobody asked questions he would lie awake that night worrying about the wrong he had done.

Should he or should he not?

The hard lesson for the day was about "How can water produce such great effects?" A rather dry lesson, in spite of its title. And old man Anderson, his teacher, spoke in a sing-song, and the organ squeaked, because it needed fixing.

Joe pressed his lips together until they hurt, and he clenched his fists.

"Oh, Joe, you are a Sunday school boy all right. Don't dare to jump in! Scared papa will spank you!"

It was the evil one who inspired Verner to jeer that way but it was the Saviour who turned those evil words in the right direction.

Joe felt anger rise in his bosom.

"I dare to jump in and I am not afraid of a lickin'!" he shouted. "But I am man enough to go to Sunday school when I said I would. Good-bye!"

And with a lightened heart he ran on.

And that day his memory seemed keener than ever before. He knew his lesson the best in the class. And old man Anderson was not so very sing-songy after all, and somebody had fixed the organ, and best of all, a visiting pastor happened to drop in and he told the most wonderful stories about India, where he had been a missionary. Joe had never spent such a happy day in Sunday school before.

And when he came home that evening, for this was an afternoon Sunday school in the country, mother had made the most wonderful meat-balls, and a cool, juicy apple-pie was put right before him too, the best she had ever baked, and Joe ate like a soldier lad who had fought a battle and won a victory.

THE SEVENTH PETITION.

But deliver us from evil.

What does this mean?

Answer: We pray in this petition, as in a summary, that our heavenly Father would deliver us from all manner of evil, whether it affect body or soul, property or reputation, and at last, when the hour of death shall come, grant us a blessed end, and graciously take us from this world of sorrow to Himself in heaven.

MR. MORRIS WAITING FOR THE CALL.

Lawrence and Ellen were sent with a cake to Mr. Morris.

Mr. Morris lives on Kingland Avenue, in the little green cottage on the sunny side of the street. I am sure you have seen it. The little lawn is the greenest in the village.

Mr. Morris is very old and his heart is very "bad" but he still manages to walk around and tend to his little chores and he is in his pew in church every Sunday morning.

"My engine is almost worn out," he sometimes says with a twinkle in his eyes, "The Lord will have to give me a new one soon, that's all there is to it!"

He was delighted to see the neighbor's children.

"How good your mother is to think of an old man," he exclaimed.

And Lawrence and Ellen were proud to have a mother who

bakes cakes not only for her own children but also for sick and tired folks.

They sat down on the sofa in Mr. Morris's cosy little parlor while he unwrapped the cake and put it in the bread-box. This took a long time, because Mr. Morris is very old and very weak, but finally he came back with the empty plate all washed clean, and then he sat down in his own easy-chair and got ready to talk.

Lawrence decided that he would let the boys play ball alone, and Ellen resolved to wash her doll-dresses after supper.

They knew from past experience that Mr. Morris had something interesting to tell them.

At first he couldn't say much, because his breath was very short, but before long he was calm and could speak with ease.

"I want to tell you something, my children," he said gravely. "I have an idea that I won't stay here on Kingland Avenue much longer. I must leave for another land."

"Oh, don't say that!" Ellen exclaimed.

"Why not? It's the truth!" Mr. Morris continued. "And I am glad to leave. You may not understand me now, but some day you will. God has been very good to me for over seventy years. I have had plenty to eat and I have always had enough clothes to keep out the weather. And I have had a home. First my mother left me, of course, and then my wife—ten years ago now—but that is the way of the world, and it is so beautiful to look back upon a happy life of love together. I have been well all the time until the piston rings in the old engine began to rattle."

The old man chuckled as he beat his chest lightly.

"Well, I have not deserved all this goodness," he spoke on. "God has been very good to me, too good. And to think of it! His goodness has only started. When I die it is going to be just like the day when we stepped on the train for our

honeymoon, Ann and I. We went only a hundred miles or so to the biggest city around, but we had a glorious time. So I am going to go alone on another train this time, but when I get to the end of the journey, I am sure Ann will be there to meet me, and then we are going to walk up the hill to a golden palace, and then to another and another. Because there are many mansions, as you remember, and room enough for all of us, and they are ready for us even now, because the Lord Jesus has prepared them."

When Lawrence and Ellen walked home that afternoon they could not speak for a long time. The thoughts of Mr. Morris had been almost too great for them.

"I feel almost as if I had been in heaven," Ellen finally exclaimed.

"So do I," said Lawrence.

THE CONCLUSION.

For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

What does the word "Amen" mean?

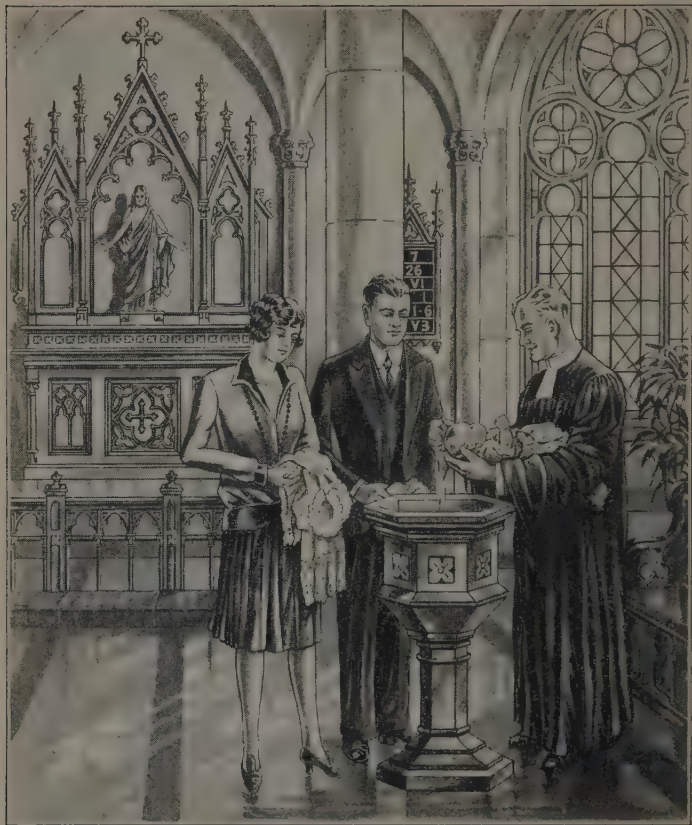
Answer: It means that I should be assured that such petitions are acceptable to our heavenly Father, and are heard by Him; for He Himself has commanded us to pray in this manner, and has promised to hear us. Amen, Amen, that is, Yea, yea, it shall be so.

'Tis Thy prayer, Jesus, and now 'tis mine.
My heart has spoken its every word,
Thy lips have taught me its every line,
OUR prayer is ended and Thou hast heard.

AMEN.

The Sacrament of Baptism

In the plain form in which the head of
the family shall teach it to his household



“Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”

I.

WHAT IS BAPTISM?

Answer: Baptism is not simply water, but it is the water used according to God's command and consecrated with God's word.

WHAT IS THAT WORD OF GOD?

Answer: It is the word of our Lord Jesus Christ, as recorded in the last chapter of Matthew: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

BORN TO THE KINGDOM.

When we are born into this world, we at once become the children of our parents and their heirs, that is, those who shall receive all their property when they die. We also become at once citizens of the United States, or of whatever country happens to be our birthplace.

I do not remember when I was a babe. I have a hazy memory from my third or fourth year, but I know nothing about my life before that, except what others have told me. Yet, though I do not remember, I was then most certainly the child of my parents and a citizen of my native land.

One day I was brought to God in Holy Baptism. I do not remember that either. But just as I was born and became the heir of my parents, so I was baptized and became the child and heir of God—in both cases without knowing anything about it.

You recall from your Bible History that the children of the Old Testament were circumcised, usually on their eighth day, and became then the "children of God," "children of Israel." John the Baptist and Jesus were both circumcised on the eighth day of their lives.

In the New Testament Holy Baptism takes the place of circumcision, and through this simple sacrament, the Water and the Word, we are united with the Church and with Christ, our Saviour, and become "the children of God."

Some wonder if Jesus would not rather have us wait with our Baptism until we become older and wiser. This is all wrong. Our parents love us just as much, possibly even more, when we are little and helpless than they do when we become older and go our own way. Should not God love us in a similar manner and far more intensely?

You remember the story in Mark, chapter ten:

Jesus and His disciples were walking through the country one day, conversing about the great things of God. All was peace around them, and the disciples felt as if their souls were lifted up to heaven itself.

But suddenly they heard noises around them, cries, and whimperings, and scoldings. And when they looked around them, behold, they were surrounded by a little army of children who were carried or led by their mothers to Jesus.

"Bless them, bless our little ones, O Master!" the mothers were exclaiming.

And then the children would shout and shriek and cry, as a flock of children will.

Peter and John and the rest of the men were horrified. Here they had been walking and talking in peace and had felt the Spirit of God working in their hearts. And then suddenly these whimpering little ones come and spoil it all.

"Hush! Hush!" they exclaimed angrily. "Run away now!

Don't trouble the Master! He doesn't want to be disturbed. Away with you!"

But when the Lord Jesus heard this, He became very much displeased.

"Let the little children come unto me," he said. "Forbid them not, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein."

Then He took the little ones in His arms, and He laid His hands upon them and blessed them.

So we can easily see that Jesus wants us to bring the little ones to Him and through Baptism make them disciples in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

I count the day of my Baptism, even though I do not remember it, one of the most glorious days in my life, because then I was taken into the arms of Jesus and became a child of God, and through faith I am now one of the joint-heirs, one of the owners, of heaven and earth and all the beauty and glory of them.

II.

WHAT GIFTS OR BENEFITS DOES BAPTISM BESTOW?

Answer: It works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives everlasting salvation to all who believe, as the word and promise of God declare.

WHAT IS THIS WORD AND PROMISE OF GOD?

Answer: It is the word of our Lord Jesus Christ, as recorded in the last chapter of Mark: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

HEIRS OF GOD.

Once upon a time a princess went bathing in the river Nile, and as she bathed she heard a whimpering.

At first she thought it might be some strange bird or reptile, but soon, behind the tall grasses, she found a little boat-like basket, and in that basket a little baby boy.

"What a darling child!" the princess exclaimed.

Then she wept, because the tears of the little one touched her so.

"Bring him to the palace," she commanded." This shall be my own child. I will adopt him. And his name shall be Moses, because I found him here among the reeds."

In the next moment one of the maids held the little one in her arms and the weeping ceased.

Then Miriam emerged from behind the trees where she had stood watching.

"Wouldst thou have a nurse for the wee one, O mighty princess?" she asked meekly, prostrating herself upon the ground.

"Why, so I would," she answered.

"I know of one," said Miriam, and in due time Moses' own mother stood in the presence of the daughter of Pharaoh.

"Take this child and nurse it for me," the princess commanded. "And remember, he is the son of the daughter of the king!"

And Moses was nursed by his mother, and he grew up, as we all know, to be a mighty prince, and for many years he was among the great and wise men of the land, ate at the table of Pharaoh, and enjoyed all the privileges of the court.

When we were baptized we were also adopted, not by a mere princess, but by God Himself.

Our mother nursed us. Our father labored that we might have our daily bread. But we belonged, and still belong, not primarily to them. We belong first of all to God. We are His children, and He is training us for work in His kingdom.

What a wonderful thing this is!

I wonder if we appreciate it as we ought.

We are God's children, dedicated to Him. The world is ours with all its mysteries. We have a right to all the food we can eat—provided we earn it by daily labor. And we have a right to dress well—although some of us think too much about that. And God wants us to use all of our mind, our memory, our will, our imagination, to journey as far as we can into the kingdoms of beauty and holiness and wisdom.

More than that, all nature is ours. We human beings have tamed animals and plants by the thousands. They are ours. So are the mountains and the plains, the lakes and the seas. Even the air is ours, so that if we only learn how, we can sail above the clouds.

More than that! Some day we shall die. Our bodies shall be hid away in the grave, but our souls, our spirits, shall return unto God who gave them.

And the wonders of the next world shall be infinitely greater than those of this world. No one is able now to describe them, because they are too wonderful to paint or to depict with mere words. We know this, however, that in comparison to our own cities, which we think are so marvelous, the streets shall be of gold. And God Himself shall be the light of that wonderful land. And we shall never weep again, never suffer pain, never die, but shall live in the presence of God for ever and ever!

We are children of God through baptism and through faith in the Lord Christ.

Thanks be to God for His mercy and lovingkindness which endureth forevermore!

III.

HOW CAN WATER DO SUCH GREAT THINGS?

Answer: It is not the water, indeed, that does such great things, but the word of God, connected with the water, and our faith which relies on that word of God. For without the word of God, it is simply water and no baptism. But when connected with the word of God, it is a baptism, that is, a gracious water of life and a washing of regeneration in the Holy Ghost, as St. Paul says to Titus, in the third chapter: "According to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying."

WATER—WORD—FAITH.

Out of little things come the great.

Once a little acorn fell among the leaves. You have seen an acorn, have you not? A brown nut about the size of the tip of your thumb with a crown on the top of it.

The leaves nestled close to the acorn and when the rain fell they covered him as with a rug.

As he lay there the little acorn at first felt so cold he thought he would die. After many gloomy days and dark nights he began to grow very warm. He felt strange stirrings within

him. He thought he would burst, so hot he felt. And sure enough, one day he did burst, and something grew out of him. No, not one thing, but two.

One little finger-like root grew downward into the earth and saw there the mysterious kingdom of the mole. Another sprout grew upward and soon it peeped out at the sun from among the fallen leaves.

The acorn thus became a little sapling. And the sapling grew. Its roots dug deeper into the soft earth. Its stem grew taller and thicker. It reached a foot above the ground one day, then two feet. In the course of years it grew so high that you would think it was trying to climb to the very stars.

After many years the little acorn had become a mighty oak-tree which swayed in the breeze or bowed its giant head when the storm-winds blew. It was the mightiest tree, the king of the forest.

One winter day some men came and cut down the oak-tree. It fell with a great crash into the snow. Its trunk was cut and trimmed and brought to the sawmill where it was changed into fine, clean planks. And these again were dried and seasoned and hewn and before long they were joined together with a great many other planks and painted and they floated upon the blue billows firmly and majestically in the shape of a great boat.

Baptism, my friends, is like a little acorn. God plants a little seed in the heart of the child. It looks very humble to begin with, and may be so small that you cannot even see it.

But God's Word, for that is the name of that seed, is nestling under the leaves in the heart of the child. It bursts open, and sends its roots downward and its blades upward and as the child grows, so does also the Word.

Faith is born in that little soul and it grows by and by, if God's will be done, into a mighty tree which cannot be torn from its place by the whirlwind.

For many a year it may thus remain in the world, this tree of faith which grew out of the acorn which God planted at the time of baptism. Some day, however, death comes, and he will saw that tree down, but then God comes—because God is always with us in life or death—and He transforms the oak into a fair vessel which floats not merely on the waters but glides through the mysterious oceans of eternity.

And this boat of faith will never sink nor rot, but will float on from wonder to wonder for ever and ever.

IV.

WHAT DOES SUCH BAPTIZING WITH WATER SIGNIFY?

Answer: It signifies that the old Adam in us, together with all sins and evil lusts, should be drowned by daily sorrow and repentance, and be put to death; and that the new man should daily come forth and rise, to live before God in righteousness and holiness for ever.

WHERE IS IT SO WRITTEN?

Answer: St. Paul, in the sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, says: "We are buried with Christ by baptism into death, that like as He was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

OLD ADAM AND THE MONK.

The best stories in the world are the stories I heard or read in my boyhood.

I still remember and I hope I shall never forget the people who lived in my fancy then, such as Cinderella and Tom Thumb and Robinson Crusoe and Daniel and David and Christian and scores of others. I love them all. They are all hung in beautiful golden frames in the parlors of my memory.

One story comes to me from those happy days as I read

about "the old Adam, who should be drowned by daily sorrow and repentance."

Once upon a time there lived somewhere in Germany or Italy a monk who was very hot-headed. That is, his "old Adam" took the form of a bad temper. If anyone touched him or said anything unpleasant, instantly the face of the monk would become red as a beet, and if he did not catch his antagonist, he would shake his fists and curse and swear. A few minutes later, he would calm down, and then he would go to the church and ask forgiveness and would feel very bad the rest of the day.

"Never again! Never again!" he would exclaim to himself.

But before the day was over someone would provoke him, and again the monk would fly into a rage.

He prayed over his sin. He asked the prior of his monastery to pray for him. He whipped his naked back with thongs. He prayed and tortured himself, but almost every day anger would surge like a mighty flood into his heart and he would sin grievously.

One day he decided to leave the monastery and become a hermit.

"When I live all by myself I will have no one to hurt my feelings and no one to scold. Then at last I will be able to control my temper," he thought.

He walked for two days and finally came to a grotto in the mountains where a hermit had lived before but which had been abandoned when he died.

The monk was very tired when he reached the cave, so he threw himself on the moss and slept until morning. Then he felt thirsty. He found a stone jar left by the dead hermit, and hurried down the hill toward the spring where he had slaked his thirst the evening before.

He did not notice a sharp rock in his path. He stubbed his toe against the rock. In pain and anger the monk threw the stone jar against the offending rock and broke it into a thousand pieces.

The monk sat down under a tree to nurse his toe, his anger soon left him, and he began to weep.

"I lose my temper if I am all alone," he groaned. "What shall I do? What shall I do?"

The poor monk remained in the grotto for a week, thinking and praying, praying and thinking. Finally he decided to go back to his brethren.

"I can't get away from my old Adam," he told them when he returned. "Even when I am all alone, he is with me. Stones provoke me where men do not. My temper is my cross. I am going to fight it every day of my life and by the grace of God I may some day be able to fasten the evil spirit with seven chains. If I fail, I am saved nevertheless through Christ, my Saviour. Just as I must wash my face every day, so must I wash my soul.

The old monk was right. I know it only too well. We drown the old Adam tonight, but tomorrow he is up again and knocking at our front door.

But we disown him. He is not our friend. We hate our sin, and every time we do wrong, we ask God to forgive us for Jesus' sake.

And so the war continues between the old and the new man in our soul, but if we are faithful to the Lord Jesus, we shall finally overcome and win the victory.

WHAT IS CONFESSION?

Answer: Confession consists of two parts: the one is that we confess our sins; the other, that we receive absolution or forgiveness from the pastor as from God Himself, in no wise doubting, but firmly believing, that our sins are thereby forgiven before God in heaven.

WHAT SINS SHOULD WE CONFESS?

Answer: Before God we should acknowledge ourselves guilty of all manner of sins, even of those of which we are not aware, as we do in the Lord's Prayer. To the pastor we should confess only those sin which we know and feel in our hearts.

WHAT ARE SUCH SINS?

Answer: Here examine yourself in the light of the Ten Commandments, whether as a father or mother, son or daughter, master or servant, you have been disobedient, unfaithful, slothful, ill-tempered, unchaste, or quarrelsome, or whether you have injured any one by word or deed, stolen, neglected or wasted aught, or done any other evil.

COMING OF AGE IN GOD'S KINGDOM.

Of all confessions, the most glorious is the confession we make just before communion.

Those of us who are confirmed should make confession from our inmost heart at every communion service; then we should

believe when the pastor in Christ's behalf declares that our sins are forgiven. After that we should go forward and receive the body and blood of Jesus under the bread and the wine and be strengthened thus for our daily task as citizens and Christians.

Those of us who are not confirmed can make the same confession. We are not permitted to take the communion, because we are not well enough instructed to fully understand the Sacrament, but we are nevertheless forgiven just as completely as our elders. And we should pray and long for the day when we shall be confirmed and may partake of the Lord's Supper.

We may wonder why we are not allowed to partake of communion until after confirmation. Let us take a similar case. We are citizens of America even when we are babies or boys and girls, and our country provides schools for us and takes care of us. We have all the rights and privileges of citizens, except one. We can not vote until we are of age—twenty-one years old. Why? The reason is very simple. We do not know enough about the government nor about the people who should govern until we are of mature age. By that time we are supposed to understand the duties of citizenship, and so we are given the right to help in the government of our nation.

It was a great day for me, I remember, when I voted for President for the first time.

It is the same way with the Lord's Supper. We should not partake of that unless we know something about God and about our own souls, and so we have confirmation instruction, during which the pastor teaches us these deep things of life. After that, if we feel that our heart is right before God, we are allowed to take part in the Holy Communion.

It was somewhat the same way in Jesus' day. You remember how Jesus was taken to the temple when he was twelve years of age and there he was "confirmed" according to the

custom of his time, that is, he was presented before the priests and became an "Israelite," a full member of the Jewish church and nation.

Thank God for confirmation and for the Holy Supper given unto us by the Lord Jesus Christ for the strengthening of our souls!

The Sacrament of the Altar.

In the plain form in which the head of
the family shall teach it to his household



"This is my body"
*"This cup is the new Testament in
my blood"*

I.

WHAT IS THE SACRAMENT OF THE ALTAR?

Answer: It is the true Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, given unto us Christians to eat and to drink, as it was instituted by Christ Himself.

WHERE IS IT SO WRITTEN?

Answer: The holy Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke, together with St. Paul, write thus:

“Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and when He had given thanks, He brake it and gave it to His disciples saying, Take, eat; this is My Body, which is given for you; this do in remembrance of Me.

“After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; this cup is the New Testament in My Blood, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins; this do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

“IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.”

You and I are sitting side by side in the pew.

The organist has just finished the prelude, a soft, soothing masterpiece, and now we turn to the hymn. We join in the

singing, but we hardly know the words which we pronounce. We are thinking about the many problems of our lives, particularly about those of the moment.

But as we sing, it begins to dawn upon us that we are invited to a feast today.

The pastor kneels before the altar. As the hymn is finished, he turns toward us. He prays, he reads a text, he begins to preach.

We are not very good listeners at first. With one ear we hear the sermon, but with the other we are listening to the noises in the great world outside.

In a few minutes, however, we are absorbed in the message. The pastor describes our sinfulness, our need of the grace of God, and he invites us finally to come forward to receive the bread of life and the water of life.

By this time we have almost completely forgotten the work-a-day world. The beautiful sanctuary, the solemnity of the occasion, the gracious words of God, all inspires us with a new feeling, a new mood. Verily, we are in the house of God.

"Let us now turn to God and humbly confess our sins," the pastor exclaims.

We bow as we repeat the words of the confession, and as we do so, we feel as one who looks at his face in the glass before washing. We see so many spots.

We have nothing to boast of, that is certain. How many times have we not been careless in our talk during the past week, and we have been unkind to one another? We have failed to be helpful. We have broken all the commandments. So we humbly confess to God our sins.

When the confession is ended, the pastor rises and turns toward us and assures us in the name of the Triune God that if we have been sincere in our confession, God will most cer-

tainly for Christ's sake forgive us all our sins and in His behalf we are assured that all our sins are forgiven.

The communion service follows.

The pastor faces us with the silver platter in his hands. Together we walk up the aisle and together we kneel before the altar.

"This is the body of Christ, given for thee," the pastor repeats.

"This is the blood of Christ, shed for thee!"

As we kneel we think of Christ on the cross, we think of our past life, of the recent assurance of forgiveness, of the unseen but nevertheless very real presence of the Saviour just now—and as we eat the wafer and sip the wine we feel a new power entering our souls.

We return to our pews. We bow in prayer, and then we sing the hymn with the rest of the congregation. All too soon the service is over, the benediction pronounced, the threefold Amen sung. The organ echoes the refrain as we pray in silence.

We cannot express the thought within us, but we feel that we have been with God and now we can face tomorrow's duties with loftier hope and renewed energies.

II.

WHAT IS THE BENEFIT OF SUCH EATING AND DRINKING?

Answer: It is pointed out in these words: "Given and shed for you for the remission of sins." Through these words the remission of sins, life and salvation are given unto us in the Sacrament; for where there is remission of sins, there is also life and salvation.

THE DEEP THINGS OF GOD.

John and Mary are twins and the only children in the family.

It is Saturday, an unforgettable day, with majesty and solemnity in the air. Tomorrow is Confirmation Day.

This morning, after breakfast, the two children were together in the orchard, leaving father and mother alone in the kitchen.

Mother wiped a tear from her face. Father saw it. His face twitched.

"How fast they have grown up!" mother exclaimed. "It seems like yesterday that they toddled about in their rompers, and now Mary is almost a young lady and John almost a grown man!"

Father coughed mysteriously.

"I wonder if they realize the importance of tomorrow!" he said slowly.

"I wonder," mother repeated. "I have thought of speaking to Mary about it seriously today. Maybe you will have a chance to talk over things with John too. I think it is our duty."

"Yes, it is," father admitted.

As they went about their work that day, mother in the kitchen and father in the machine shed, both of them chided themselves for feeling such a sadness in their hearts.

"John and Mary are the finest children in the world," they thought. "They have their faults, but all in all they do what is right. They love us and we love them, and all of us love the Lord. It is only this—they are growing up, and we want them to remain children. It cannot be."

And mother straightened her back at the sink, and father stood a while in the doorway of the shed looking over his fields southward toward the rolling hills.

That afternoon John helped his father oiling and repairing the machinery in the shed.

They worked in silence for half an hour or more but both of them felt that something ought to be said.

Father had to break the ice, of course.

"Tomorrow is a great day for us," he said almost cautiously.

"Yes!"

Somehow the ideas were hard to express.

"You take communion for the first time tomorrow, John!"

"Yes!"

"I remember the day I was confirmed. It was a great day. I shall never forget it."

John finally opened up.

"I would like to ask a question, dad," he said.

"Yes."

"I have been bothered a little bit about the Lord's Supper. Just what good does it do?"

"Our pastor has explained it, hasn't he?"

"Sure, but I would like to hear what you have to say about it."

Father had to clear his throat.

"Well, in a way it is a great mystery. We never in this world will be able to know fully just how the Lord Jesus can be present at every communion, but He is. In a way it is very simple too. Christ has given us this Sacrament to assure us that He is with us and that our sins are forgiven, and if our sins are forgiven, and they certainly are, then we have also salvation and life in Him. It is something like this, my son. You have seen and studied the little electric light system we have on our farm. Nobody knows what electricity is, but we use it. We simply put a lamp in the socket where it belongs and we have light. When we believe, we are put in the right socket, and Christ does the rest."

"I understand," said John.

John will never forget the talk he had with his dad in the machine shed that afternoon. Somehow faith and religion seem most real when your own father talks to you about them.

III.

HOW CAN THE BODILY EATING AND DRINKING PRODUCE SUCH GREAT BENEFITS?

Answer: The eating and drinking, indeed, do not produce them, but the words: "Given and shed for you for the remission of sins." For besides the bodily eating and drinking, these words are the chief thing in the Sacrament; and he who believes them, has what they say and declare, namely, the remission of sins.

FOOD FROM HEAVEN.

Father kept the promise he made this morning.

He is still working in the machine shed while John is finishing some chores in the barn, and both of them are thinking thoughts too deep for expression.

About an hour ago, mother and Mary sat in the parlor sewing. The white dress must be spotless and perfect tomorrow, but mother did not think of the dress so much as of the soul of the young lady who was to wear that white, lustrous silk.

"I hope you know all your answers," she began falteringly.

"Of course I do, mother."

"I mean not only by heart but in your heart," mother repeated.

"What do you mean?"

Mary knew, but she wanted mother to make her meaning clearer, and mother was delighted that her daughter was willing to go deeper into the truth.

"I don't know if I can explain it all," said mother. "These things are too deep for us, and yet our heavenly Father wants us to think and talk about them. Suppose you repeat to me the very first question which occurs to you."

"How can bodily eating and drinking produce such great benefits?" Mary repeated from the Catechism and recited the answer.

"Fine!" mother exclaimed proudly. "If you answer that way tomorrow—of course you will. Now what does this really mean to us? How can a simple ceremony like eating a wafer and drinking a few drops of wine give us so many blessings?"

Mary did not answer. She left sewing in silence, waiting for the beautiful cadences of her mother's voice.

"Ordinary eating and drinking is simple too," mother resumed. "And yet, through eating bread and drinking water or milk our bodies grow strong and our minds become clear. As we listen to God's Word or as we partake of the Lord's Supper, our soul eats the very food of heaven. The eating is called *faith*. By faith we take in and make our very own the mercies and grace and love and wisdom of God. Do you understand?"

"I think I do," Mary answered gently.

"Father and I talked of it this morning." Mother gulped down something. "John and you are growing up and growing away from us——"

"No we aren't, mother!"

And Mary ran to mother and threw her arms around her neck.

"Oh yes, you are, and you must!" mother declared lovingly. "It would be a terrible thing if you didn't. Still we fathers and mothers are selfish. We want to hold time in check. We want to keep our little ones forever. But it cannot be."

She was silent a moment. Mary gave her another hug. Then she sat down to her sewing again.

"I will be very happy just the same if both of you grow up as Christian young people," mother continued with a sunny smile. "Father and I have tried to teach you the way of God and so far you have followed it. Now, if you will continue in this way, all four of us shall be happy all our lives, and even when we leave this world we shall die happy in the thought that we shall have a blessed reunion with God."

I know not how long mother and daughter talked, but I do know that when father and John came in, they were still talking and had completely forgotten about supper.

"That's all right," father said understandingly. "John and I will finish the chores while we wait."

IV.

WHO, THEN, RECEIVES THE SACRAMENT WORTHILY?

Answer: Fasting and bodily preparation are indeed a good outward discipline, but he is truly worthy and well prepared who believes these words: "Given and shed for you for the remission of sins." But he who does not believe these words or who doubts them, is unworthy and unprepared; for the words: "For you," require truly believing hearts.

THE FIRST COMMUNION.

It is only a memory now, but one of those beautiful pictures which we turn over and over in our book of memories and enjoy more as the years pass by.

John and Mary were confirmed this morning.

Last night after the late supper, father almost broke down as he read the daily meditation.

It is strange, but tears seem to be the best way to express ourselves when we are profoundly moved and happy. Father and mother, Mary and John, sat a long time in silence as the twilight fell. Their eyes were sad, but their hearts were happy.

"In ourselves we are not worthy," father said at last. "God has been too good to us. You two have been the joy of our lives, and you still are. You do not always obey. Sometimes we must scold you a little. But all in all, my dear children, you have walked and still walk in God's way. Tomorrow

you will partake of your first communion. I know you will do so reverently, confessing your sins and accepting with gratitude the gifts of God, for the words *for you* require truly believing hearts."

Then father prayed, and all repeated in unison the Lord's Prayer and the Benediction, and soon they were all asleep.

No wonder Mary and John acquitted themselves best in a class of almost forty.

After the examination, the pastor spoke to all the children. He pleaded with them to be faithful to the Lord Christ all their lives, and assured them that if they were, God would bless them in time and eternity.

The twins took in every word with eye and ear and soul. Of all the catechumens I am certain that they received most from God that day, because their father and mother had so carefully prepared them the day before.

Now they are resting after the strenuous morning.

The sun is shining brightly upon their little home, flooding it with light as the love of God flooded their hearts.

It is a glorious day, the day of their confirmation.

"Clear was the heaven and blue, and May, with her cap
crowned with roses,
Stood in her holiday dress in the fields, and the wind and the
brooklet

Murmured gladness and peace—God's peace!"

(TEGNÉR.)

MORNING AND EVENING PRAYER.

Morning Prayer:

I give thanks unto Thee, heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ Thy dear Son, that Thou hast protected me through the night from all danger and harm; and I beseech Thee to preserve and keep me, this day also, from all sin and evil; that in all my thoughts, words, and deeds I may serve and please Thee. Into Thy hands I commend my body and soul, and all that is mine. Let Thy holy angel have charge concerning me, that the wicked one have no power over me. Amen.

Evening Prayer:

I give thanks unto Thee, heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ Thy dear Son, that Thou hast this day graciously protected me, and I beseech Thee to forgive me all my sins, and the wrong which I have done, and by Thy great mercy defend me from all the perils and dangers of this night. Into Thy hands I commend my body and soul, and all that is mine. Let Thy holy angel have charge concerning me, that the wicked one have no power over me. Amen.

THE DAY'S STORY.

I am a Day and I am almost done. But before I depart for the Land of Eternity I would like to tell you my story.

I have seen many strange things during the twenty and four hours of my life. I have seen thousands draw their last breath. I have seen many more thousands enter into this world for the first time. I have seen men and women cruelly murdered in dark streets. But I have also seen men and women and children praying in their secret chambers, thus fastening themselves with golden chains to the throne of God.

I think especially of one of them, a lad of fifteen or so, Lawrence by name.

He is a real boy. He can throw a ball as far as any lad in the neighborhood, and he likes to go fishing, and he would like to be lost with Robinson Crusoe on a deserted island.

Lawrence slept, "not like a log but like a logger," last night, and he awoke about seven, when the sun shone in his face. As his custom is, he folded his hands and prayed the very first thing. Then he rushed into his clothes, washed, and had breakfast.

At school he studied his lesson and recited splendidly.

At recess time, however, I am sorry to say, he and Gilbert had some words. They even struck at each other once or twice. If the bell had not rung just then, it is hard to say what might have happened.

At noon the two boys made up, and now they are as good friends as ever.

After school, Lawrence and his father finished the painting of the house which they started last week.

So Lawrence was very, very tired when we went to bed, but he nevertheless folded his hands and closed his eyes and read the longest prayer he could think of. Then he fell asleep,

and just now he is about ten thousand miles from the shores of Awakening.

In about sixty seconds I will be all done, all gone. I wonder if I have been worth while. So many evil things are done during my rule, but this midnight I feel satisfied.

There goes the church-bell—one, two—five—ten—eleven—twelve.

Good-night and farewell!

BLESSING AND THANKSGIVING AT TABLE.

Before the Meal:

The eyes of all wait upon Thee, O Lord: and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest Thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

O Lord God, heavenly Father, bless unto us these Thy gifts, which of Thy tender kindness Thou hast bestowed upon us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

After the Meal:

O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever.

We give thanks unto Thee, O God our Father, for all Thy benefits, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with Thee liveth and reigneth for ever and ever. Amen.

THE GRACELESS MEAL.

One of the stories from my boyhood which I recall with a kind of romantic pleasure is that of the hired man who forgot to say grace. Perhaps you have heard it.

This man became the servant of a Christian farmer, who was highly displeased when he discovered that his hired man would sit down to eat without as much as bowing his head,

and would dig his knife and fork and spoon into the food and hurl it into his mouth much as you shovel coal into a furnace.

But being a wise man, the farmer waited a while before he spoke to his man. He waited many days, in fact, until he knew exactly what to say. Then he said it.

"Jim," said he, "after dinner today, will you please bring a bushel of corn to the pigs? Then look and listen, and you shall know how my hogs say grace."

The hired man was half angry and half puzzled. He didn't know what to say, so he said nothing.

But he carried the corn to the pigs.

They rushed out of their house with loud grunting and squealing, and fighting and biting right and left they grabbed for the cobs, and crunched the corn with loud smackings.

"Notice how my hogs say grace," the farmer had said.

Jim looked and listened, and all that afternoon he thought about it, sometimes with anger and sometimes with shame, but at the supper table he bowed his head a moment before he dug into the bacon and the potatoes.

"I want to eat like a Christian and not like a hog," he thought to himself, and soon learned to ask God's blessing before meals.

TABLE OF DUTIES.

The Little Catechism of Martin Luther closes with the "Hausstafel" or Table of Duties containing "certain Scripture passages for various holy orders and estates."

We shall not print them in full in our little book. Instead we shall ask you to take your Bibles and read the passages designated. Study them carefully.

Bishops, Pastors and Preachers. 1 Tim. 3. 2-6; 1. 6-9.

What Duties Hearers Owe Their Pastors. 1 Cor. 9. 14; Gal. 6. 6; 1 Tim. 5. 17-18; Heb. 13. 17.

Magistrates. Rom. 13. 1-4.

What Duties Subjects Owe Magistrates. Mt. 22. 21; Rom. 12. 1; 5-7; 1 Tim. 2. 1-2; Tit. 3. 1; 1 Pet. 2. 13.

Husbands. 1 Pet. 3. 7; Col. 3. 19.

Wives. Eph. 5. 22; 1 Pet. 3. 6.

Parents. Eph. 6. 4.

Children. Eph. 6. 1-3.

Male and Female Members and Laborers.
Eph. 6. 5-8.

Masters and Mistresses. Eph. 6. 9; Col. 4. 1.

Young Persons in General. 1 Pet. 5. 5-6.

Widows. 1 Tim. 5. 5-6.

Christians in General. Rom. 13. 9-10; 1 Tim. 2. 1-2.

Luther's idea with the Table of Duties was that each father should be in word and deed the head of the household; not the tyrant, but the head. He should be wise and brave enough to lead his family through the troubles and dangers and joys of life, just as the sea captain steers his ship over the turbulent sea.

He should be a house-father. He should lead the family devotions as well as teach his children and servants the duties which one owes to another and to God.

THE END OF THE JOURNEY.

Now we have finished our journey through "The King's Garden." We have traveled fast. We have not had time to see all its beauty. It will be your pleasant duty and mine to do that later.

A few weeks ago the writer visited the Field Museum in Chicago. He saw wonders of nature from the past and present. He saw statues and furnishings and swords and fountains from all parts of the world. He saw mummies and reproductions of the tombs of the ancient Pharaohs.

But the trip was made in two hours. It was only a rapid survey. From time to time, he expects to return to the Museum and spend hours in one little corner and thus study carefully and learn much.

This book is somewhat like that visit to the Field Museum. We have made a swift journey and have in our minds a map of the land. Now I hope and pray that we shall from time to time pause at some Commandment or Petition for an hour or two and thus learn more about the deep things of life and of God.



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